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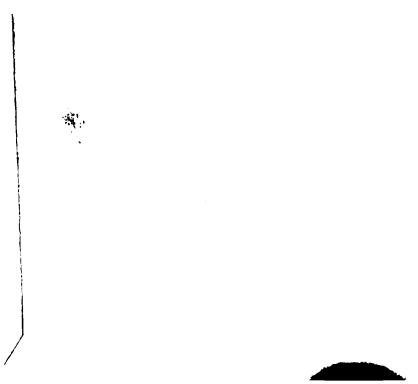

HISTORY OF

THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE,

AND

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS,

BY

HON. GEORGE BANCROFT.

WITH PORTRAIT AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

NEW YORK:
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LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
GEORGE BANCROFT.

By OLIVER DYER,

AUTHOR OF "GREAT SENATORS."

CHAPTER I.

MR. BANCROFT'S LIFE AND CAREER.

In the last revision of his History of the United States, made in 1884, Mr. Bancroft says:

"Scarcely one who wished me good speed when I first essayed to trace the history of America remains to greet me with a welcome as I near the goal. Deeply grateful as I am for the friends who rise up to gladden my old age, their encouragement

must renew the grief for those who have gone before me."

This touching paragraph was written when Mr. Bancroft was eighty-four years old. He was born in Worcester, Mass., October 3, 1800. He died in Washington, D. C., January 17, 1891.

Mr. Bancroft came of good stock. His family name was brought from England to America by John Bancroft, who arrived in June, 1632, less than twelve years after the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth. John Bancroft settled at Lynn, Mass. His descendants were always sturdy upholders of the rights of the colonists, and enjoyed the respect of their fellow-citizens. George Bancroft's grandfather, Samuel Bancroft, filled several public stations and was a man of note. The great historian's father, Rev. Aaron Bancroft, was a Doctor of Divinity and a man of mark and influence.

He was born in 1755. When only twenty years old, he fought at Lexington and Bunker Hill. At the age of twenty-three (1778) he was graduated at Harvard College. The same year he was settled at Worcester, Mass., and died there in 1839, five years after the publication of the first volume of his son's History of the United States, and two years after the completion of the second volume. He was an able preacher, an author of note in his day, and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His son George therefore came by inheritance into his strong bias for scholastic, literary and historical pursuits.

From childhood, George Bancroft exhibited both a fondness and an aptitude for study. He was fitted for college at the Exeter (N. H.) Academy. He entered Harvard College when he was only thirteen years old, and took his degree in 1817, when

he was less than seventeen years of age. He stood second in his class, of which it is supposed he was the youngest member.

Edward Everett, who had recently been appointed Professor of Greek Literature in Harvard College, wished to have some young graduate of promise sent to Germany for purposes of study, with a view of having him enrolled on his return in the corps of college instructors. The choice fell on Bancroft, and in the summer of 1818 he went to Gottingen. He remained abroad four years, and diligently improved his opportunities.

When we contrast the youthful Bancroft's career abroad with the way in which the vast majority of young Americans spend their time in Europe, the difference is seen to be almost immeasurable. It does not appear that he wasted an hour in useless pursuits, in frivolous pleasure, or in the gratifi-

cation of an idle curiosity. Every day was devoted to study and intelligent observation, or passed in the company of the eminent men of that time whose conversation was a fountain of instruction. Eichhorn, Heeren, Blumenbach, Schleiermacher, the Humboldts, Savigny, Varnhagen von Ense, Lappenberg, Schlosser, Cousin, Chevalier Bunsen, Niebuhr and Goethe were among the distinguished men whose acquaintance he cultivated. He also met and passed a day with Byron, an interesting account of which, written by Mr. Bancroft's own hand, will be given hereafter.

During his residence abroad, Mr. Bancroft compassed a wide range of study and made enormous literary and philosophical acquisitions. He chose history as his special branch of study, and thoroughly equipped himself for its pursuit. He mastered the French, German, Spanish and Italian lan-

guages in order that their rich historical and literary treasures might come within his grasp, and he made these treasures his own to such an extent that subsequently he was never at a loss in their use and application. He also applied himself to Greek philosophy, in which he pursued a thorough course; he gave much attention to metaphysics and morals, studied the oriental languages, the interpretation of the Scriptures, ecclesiastical history, ancient history, natural history, European history and the antiquities and literature of Greece and Rome. He traveled through Europe, mingled with the philosophers, the *savants*, the statesmen of every country he visited, constantly enriching his mind by utilizing every opportunity that came within his reach and every facility bestowed by his extensive and intimate intercourse with the finest intellects of the age.

Mr. Bancroft returned to America in 1822, and in discharge of his obligations to Harvard University he accepted the office of tutor of Greek in that institution. The office was uncongenial, and he resigned it at the end of a year. In 1823, in conjunction with Dr. Joseph G. Cogswell, he founded the Round Hill School at Northampton, Mass. This school was founded for the purpose of giving boys broader, more congenial and more thorough instruction than had previously been imparted. It was to some extent modeled on Count Fellenberg's celebrated institution at Hofwyl in Switzerland. There was a farm in connection with the school, but the agricultural feature was never successfully developed. The pupils, who were to be from nine to twelve years of age on entering, and limited to twenty in number, were permitted to build houses for themselves on the estate. They established

a village, which they named Cronyville. Each boy supervised the erection of his own shanty, and had a chimney with an ample fireplace, where on winter evenings he could roast apples and potatoes, pop corn *ad libitum*, and prepare other luxuries for the delectation of his guests. It is doubtful if a happier or a healthier assemblage of boys was ever known. But the school was not a financial success; it may be said to have been ruined by its great popularity. Messrs. Cogswell and Bancroft hadn't the nerve to adhere to their original determination to limit the number of pupils to twenty. As the fame of the school increased, the pressure for admission became so strong that the limit was removed, and the number of pupils ran up to over a hundred—at one time to one hundred and twenty-seven. A large proportion of the boys came from distant homes; nearly fifty of them had to be

kept through the summer; the expense was great; the parents were slow in paying the bills, and some of them did not pay at all; the executive ability of the proprietors of the school was not equal to carrying out the coercive measures necessary to give it pecuniary sustentation, and the enterprise was abandoned. Bancroft retired in the summer of 1830, after seven years' service. Cogswell held on till 1832, when, finding his health much impaired and his losses swelled to twenty thousand dollars, he also gave up the attempt to carry on the enterprise, and the popular but unprofitable Round Hill School was discontinued.

During the seven years in which he was trying to revolutionize the system of academic education, Mr. Bancroft published several works. The first was a small volume, published in 1823, entitled "Poems by George Bancroft." Most of the poems were

written while he was in Europe. The opening poem, which is called "Expectation," is autobiographically reminiscent, and gives a glimpse of Mr. Bancroft and an insight of his feelings, when, as a youth of eighteen, he set out on his scholastic pilgrimage:

"'Twas in the season when the sun
More darkly tinges spring's fair brow,
And laughing fields had just begun
The summer's golden hues to show.
Earth still with flowers was richly dight,
And the last rose in gardens glowed:
In heaven's blue tent the sun was bright,
And western winds with fragrance flowed
'Twas then a youth bade home adieu;
And hope was young and life was new,
When first he seized the pilgrim's wand
To roam the far, the foreign land.

"There lives the marble, wrought by art,
That clime the youth would gain; he braves
The ocean's fury, and his heart
Leaps in him like the sunny waves
That bear him onward; and the light
Of hope within his bosom beams,
Like the phosphoric ray at night
That round the prow so cheerly gleams:

But still his eye would backward turn,
And still his bosom warmly burn,
As toward new worlds he 'gan to roam,
With love for Freedom's western home."

Mr. Bancroft having tried his wings in what was plainly an unsuccessful flight, evidently came to the conclusion, as Carlyle did after a similar experience, that whatever poetical fervor he possessed should be used to animate his prose. His other works were a translation of Heeren's "Politics of Ancient Greece," which appeared in 1824, and of Jacob's Latin Reader (1825). These works were intended for the use of the pupils at the Round Hill School. He was a constant contributor for many years to the old *North American Review*, his first article, which was a notice of Schiller's Minor Poems, appearing in October, 1823. He gave translations of many of the poems, and the article is said to have attracted favorable attention on both sides of the Atlantic.

He subsequently published his miscellaneous writings in a small volume. He gave much thought to theology and preached a few sermons, but finding that his tastes were irreconcilable with the pursuits and the life of a clergyman, he bade adieu to the pulpit. Yet he never relinquished his theological tenets, and the warmth of his religious sympathies and the strength of his belief in an overruling Providence are displayed in his treatment of historical events and give fervor and elevation to his style.

It was while he was at Round Hill that the plan for his great history was outlined in his mind. It developed into such a colossal design that he must have had an inspiring assurance of long life to enable him to enter with serenity upon its execution and to hope for its completion.

I have not discovered the date of Mr. Bancroft's first marriage. His wife was Miss

Sarah H. Dwight. She died in 1837, and in 1838 he married Mrs. Elizabeth Bliss. By the first marriage he had several children, only two of whom survive—John Chandler Bancroft, now (1891) residing in Boston, and George, who has spent most of his life abroad.

In politics Mr. Bancroft was a Democrat, and to him was allotted a reasonable portion of party spoils and honors. He was appointed collector of the port of Boston, by President Van Buren, in 1838, and held the office till 1841. In 1844, he was the Democratic candidate for Governor of Massachusetts, but was defeated by George N. Briggs, his Whig opponent. In 1845, he entered President Polk's cabinet as Secretary of the Navy. During his administration of that Department, he founded the Naval Academy at Annapolis, adroitly using for that purpose powers vested in the Secretary of the Navy

which had not been heretofore appreciated. While acting temporarily as Secretary of War, in 1846, he gave the order to General Taylor to march into Texas, which brought on the war with Mexico. He also gave the first order to take possession of California. These orders resulted in the ultimate acquisition by the United States of Texas, California and other vast stretches of territory.

In 1846, Mr. Bancroft relinquished the Secretaryship of the Navy to take the post of American minister to Great Britain, which he retained until the incoming of General Taylor's (Whig) administration in 1849. In the last-named year (1849) the University of Oxford made him a doctor of civil law, previous to which he had been chosen correspondent of the Royal Academy of Berlin, and also of the French Institute. He used the opportunity of his residence in Europe to enlarge and perfect his collection

of American historical material. For this purpose he sought and obtained access to the state archives of Great Britain, France and Germany, and was generously assisted in his researches by the statesmen, *savants* and government officers of those countries. He returned to the United States in 1849, and took up his residence in New York, where he resided until 1867. During that period he declined every public office that was tendered to him, and devoted himself to his great historical work, several volumes of which were completed and published. In the spring of 1867 he was appointed minister to Prussia. He accepted the office, and in 1868 he was accredited to the North German Confederation, and in 1871 to the German Empire. Important treaties were concluded with the various states of the Confederation, in 1868, under his auspices.

Mr. Bancroft's entire diplomatic career

was useful to his country and honorable to himself. One of the most important services which he rendered was in his advocacy of the cause of the United States, before the Emperor of Germany, in the settlement of what was known as the San Juan question. In determining the western portion of the boundary line between the American and the British possessions, the commissioners appointed for that purpose under the treaty of 1846, could not arrive at an agreement. If the line were run according to the claim of the American commissioners, the island of San Juan would belong to the United States and form a part of the (then) Washington Territory; if it were run in accordance with the claim of the British commissioners, the island of San Juan would belong to Great Britain. The question was at last referred to the Emperor of Germany with power "to decide finally and without appeal" the whole

matter in dispute. Mr. Blaine, in treating of this subject in his "Twenty Years of Congress," says:*

"The government of the United States was fortunate in having its rights and interests represented before the umpire by its minister at Berlin, the Honorable George Bancroft. He was a member of Mr. Polk's Cabinet during the period of the discussion and completion of the treaty of 1846, and was minister at London when the San Juan dispute began. With his prolonged experience in historical investigation, Mr. Bancroft had readily mastered every detail of the question, and was thus enabled to present it in the strongest and most favorable light. His success fitly crowned an official career of great usefulness and honor. His memorial to the Emperor of Germany, when he presented his case, was conceived in his happiest style.

*Vol. II: pp. 501–2.

The opening words were felicitous and touching: 'The treaty of which the interpretation is referred to your majesty's arbitrament was ratified more than a quarter of a century ago. Of the sixteen members of the British cabinet which framed and presented it for the acceptance of the United States, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Aberdeen and all the rest but one, are no more. The British minister who signed it at Washington is dead. Of American statesmen concerned in it, the minister at London, the President and Vice-President, the Secretary of State, and every one of the President's constitutional advisers, except one, have passed away. I alone remain, and after finishing the threescore years and ten that are the days of our years, am selected by my country to uphold its rights.'"

The Emperor of Germany decided the question in favor of the United States. The

British government accepted the decision cordially, and the work of determining the boundary line was speedily completed. Mr. Blaine adds that the conclusion of the negotiation enabled President Grant to say in his message to Congress, December, 1872—ninety years after the close of the Revolutionary war: "It leaves us for the first time in the history of the United States as a nation, without a question of disputed boundary between our territory and the possessions of Great Britain on the American continent"

Mr. Bancroft was recalled at his own request from Berlin in 1874—four years after he had passed "the three-score years and ten that are the days of our years." From that time to the day of his death he resided in Washington, but spent his summers at Newport, R. I. In Washington he found congenial society, especially among the foreign ministers (who usually came

accredited to him as well as to the government) and in the ambassadorial circles. His vast stores of information, his brilliant conversational powers, his kindness of heart, his agreeable manners, his genial spirit mellowed by age and enriched by experience, made him welcome in any society; and he was so universally esteemed and so admiringly honored that his last years were among the happiest of his four-score and ten.

CHAPTER II.

MR. BANCROFT AS A HISTORIAN.

In his essay on Edward Everett, which was published in the New York *Ledger*, Mr. Bancroft says the three qualities needed by historians are (1) perception of how bad men can be, of that evil in human nature which theologians call depravity; that (2) events are subordinate to law; that (3) after all there is something in man greater than himself. In his History of the United States of America* from the Discovery of the Continent (1492) to the Adoption of the Federal Govern-

* The edition of Mr. Bancroft's history to which reference is made in these pages, is the last (revised) edition, in six volumes, issued by D. Appleton & Co., in 1890.

ment (1789), these three qualities are amply exhibited. The depravity of human nature is constantly exposed, the overruling law which flows from the wisdom, power and mercy of a superintending Providence is never lost sight of, and that "something in man greater than himself" is seen to lead mankind onward and upward by coalescing with the overruling law, and thus gradually overcoming the native depravity of the human race by the evolution of a higher intelligence and a purer morality.

The labor which Mr. Bancroft performed in writing his history was enormous. The period embraced in his annals lacks but three years of three centuries. The vast material which he was obliged to gather was scattered through the archives and the libraries of America and Europe. The authorities which he was obliged to consult were numerous, prejudiced, contradictory, and,

in many cases, obscure, unveracious and malignant. To collect, compare and sift this mass of material so as to winnow truth from error and secure accuracy in the relation of facts, even to the details and their coloring, and develop the narrative so lucidly that the reader may intelligently follow the changes of public affairs, and with every page be carried forward in the story of two hundred and ninety-seven years of diversified yet connected events, was a task which might well tax for half a century the abilities of the most accomplished and industrious historian. The arrangement of the work, in its chronological divisions and the orderly presentation of pivotal facts, greatly helps the reader to grasp the numberless details and to keep in mind both the contemporaneity of important incidents and personages and the epochal sequences of historical events.

It is not within the scope of this sketch to

give an exhaustive analysis of Mr. Bancroft's history, or to set forth its excellence in detail. The purpose is to give such extracts from the work as will enable the reader to form an opinion of its interest, to catch glimpses of the author's philosophical insight, and to get a fair idea of the force and felicity of his style. The first division, entitled, "The History of the United States as Colonies," and comprising the period from 1492 to 1748, narrates events of novel, romantic and tragic interest. The courage, the fortitude, the avarice, the cruelty of many of the early explorers of the North American continent seem, in some instances, to have approached the superhuman. The expedition of Narvaez, as described by Mr. Bancroft, will give the reader an idea of what the thirst for gold incited men to do three hundred and sixty odd years ago:

"In 1526, Pamphilo de Narvaez obtained

from Charles V. the contract to explore and reduce all the territory from the Atlantic to the river Palmas. * * * Narvaez, who was both rich and covetous, hazarded all his treasure on the conquest of his province, and sons of Spanish nobles and men of good condition flocked to his standard. In June, 1527, his expedition, in which Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca held the second place as treasurer, left the Guadalquivir, * * * and on the 14th of April, the day before Good Friday, he anchored in or near the outlet of the bay of the Cross, now Tampa Bay.

"On the day before Easter, the governor landed, and in the name of Spain, took possession of Florida. The natives kept aloof, or, if they drew near, marked by signs their impatience for his departure. But they had shown him samples of gold, which, if their gestures were rightly interpreted, came

from the north. Disregarding, therefore, the most earnest advice of Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, he directed the ships to meet him at a harbor with which the pilot pretended acquaintance; and on the first of May, mustering three hundred men, of whom forty were mounted, he struck into the interior of the country. Then for the first time the floating peninsula, whose low sands, impregnated with lime, just lift themselves above the ocean on foundations laid by the coral worms, a country notched with bays and drenched by morasses, without hills, yet gushing with transparent fountains and watered by unfailing rivers, was traversed by white men, * * * who found no rich town, nor a high hill, nor gold. When, on rafts and by swimming, they had painfully crossed the strong current of the Withlochoochee, they were so worn away by famine as to give infinite thanks to God

for lighting upon a field of unripe maize. Just after the middle of June, they encountered the Suwanee, whose wide, deep and rapid stream delayed them till they could build a large canoe. Wading through swamps, made more terrible by immense trunks of fallen trees, that lay rotting in the water and sheltered the few but skillful native archers, on the day after Saint John's they approached Appalachee, where they had pictured to themselves a populous town and food and treasure, and found only a hamlet of forty wretched cabins.

"Here they remained for five-and-twenty days, scouring the country round in quest of silver and gold, till, perishing with hunger and weakened by fierce attacks, they abandoned all hope but of an escape from a region so remote and malign. Amid increasing dangers, they went onward through deep lagoons and the ruinous forest in search of

the sea, till in August they came upon a bay, which they called Baia de Caballos, and which now forms the harbor of St. Mark's. No trace could be found of their ships; sustaining life, therefore, by the flesh of their horses and by six or seven hundred bushels of maize plundered from the Indians, they beat their stirrups, spurs, cross-bows, and other implements of iron into saws, axes, and nails; and in sixteen days finished five boats, each of twenty-two cubits, or more than thirty feet in length. In calking their frail craft, films of the palmetto served for oakum, and they payed the seams with pitch from the nearest pines. For rigging they twisted ropes out of horsehair and the fibrous bark of the palmetto; their shirts were pieced together for sails, and oars were shaped out of savins; skins flayed from horses served for water-bottles; it was diffi-

cult in the deep sand to find large stones for anchors and ballast.

" Thus equipped, on the twenty-second of September, about two hundred and fifty men, all of the party whom famine, autumnal fevers, fatigue, and the arrows of the savage bowman had spared, embarked for the river Palmas. Former navigators had traced the outline of the coast, but among the voyagers there was not a single expert mariner. One shallop was commanded by Alonso de Castillo and Andres Dorantes, another by Cabeza de Vaca. The gunwales of the crowded vessels rose but a hand-breadth above the water, till, after creeping for seven days through shallow sounds, Gabeza seized five canoes of the natives, out of which the Spaniards made guard-boats for their five boats. During thirty days more they kept on their way, suffering from hunger and thirst, imperilled by a storm, now closely

following the shore, now avoiding savage enemies by venturing upon the sea. On the thirtieth of October, at the hour of vespers, Cabeza de Vaca, who happened to lead the van, discovered one of the mouths of the river now known as the Mississippi, and the little fleet was snugly moored among islands at a league from the stream, which brought down such a flood that even at that distance the water was sweet. They would have entered the 'very great river' in search of fuel to parch their corn, but were baffled by the force of the current and a rising north wind. A mile and a half from land they sounded, and with a line of thirty fathoms could find no bottom. In the night following a second day's fruitless struggle to go up the stream, the boats were separated; but the next afternoon Cabeza, overtaking and passing Narvaez, who chose to hug the land, struck boldly out to sea in the wake of Cas-

tillo, whom he descried ahead. They had no longer an adverse current, and in that region the prevailing wind is from the east. For four days the half-famished adventurers kept prosperously towards the west, borne along by their rude sails and their labor at the oar. All the fifth of November an easterly storm drove them forward; and, on the morning of the sixth, the boat of Cabeza was thrown by the surf on the sands of an island, which he called the Isle of Malhado—that is, of Misfortune. Except as to its length, his description applies to Galveston; his men believed themselves not far from Panuco. The Indians of the place expressed sympathy for their shipwreck by howls, and gave them food and shelter. Castillo was cast away a little farther to the east; but he and his company were saved alive. Of the other boats, an uncertain story reached Cabeza; that one foundered in the gulf; that the crews of the

two others gained the shore; that Narvaez was afterward driven out to sea; that the stranded men began wandering toward the west; and that all of them but one perished from hunger.

"Those who were with Cabeza and Castillo gradually wasted away from cold and want and despair; but Cabeza de Vaca, Dorantes, Castillo, and Estevanico, a blackamoor from Barbary, bore up against every ill, and, though scattered among various tribes, took thought for each other's welfare.

"The brave Cabeza de Vaca, as self-possessed a hero as ever graced a fiction, fruitful in resources and never wasting time in complaints of fate or fortune, studied the habits and the languages of the Indians; accustomed himself to their modes of life; peddled little articles of commerce from tribe to tribe in the interior and along the coast for forty or fifty leagues; and won

fame in the wilderness as a medicine man of wonderful gifts. In September, 1534, after nearly six years' captivity, the great forerunner among the pathfinders across the continent inspired the three others with his own marvelous fortitude, and, naked and ignorant of the way, without so much as a single bit of iron, they planned their escape. Cabeza has left an artless account of his recollections of the journey; but his memory sometimes called up incidents out of their place, so that his narrative is confused. He pointed his course far inland, partly because the nations away from the sea were more numerous and more mild; partly that, if he should again come among Christians, he might describe the land and its inhabitants. Continuing his pilgrimage through more than twenty months, sheltered from cold first by deer-skins, then by buffalo robes, he and his companions passed through Texas as

far north as the Canadian River, then along Indian paths crossed the water-shed to the valley of the Rio Grande del Norte; and borne up by cheerful courage against hunger, want of water on the plains, cold and weariness, perils from beasts and perils from red men, the voyagers went from town to town in New Mexico, westward and still to the west, till in May, 1536, they drew near the Pacific Ocean at the village of San Miguel in Sonora. From that place they were escorted by Spanish soldiers to Compostella, and all the way to the city of Mexico they were entertained as public guests."

The expedition of Ferdinand de Soto, in 1539, was much more romantic and tragic than that of Narvaez, but the narrative is too long to quote. Soto was rich and already renowned for his exploits in the New World, and when it became known that he was going to lead an expedition into the wilds of

Florida, in search of gold and glory, the whole Spanish peninsula was aroused. The noblest youths of Spain, and even of Portugal, sought service under his banner. From the numerous aspirants, Soto selected for his companions six hundred men in the bloom of life, the flower of the peninsula. The fleet sailed as gayly as on a holiday excursion. After touching at Cuba, of which Soto had been appointed governor, and where he was welcomed by long and brilliant festivals and rejoicings, he set sail in May, 1539, for Florida, leaving his wife to govern Cuba during his absence. In a fortnight his fleet anchored in the bay Spiritu Santo. The soldiers went on shore; the horses, nearly three hundred in number, were disembarked. Soto, imitating Cortez, sent his ships to Havana, lest their retention should tempt to a retreat.

"And now," says Mr. Bancroft, "began

the nomadic march of horseman and infantry, completely armed; a force exceeding in numbers and equipments the famous partisans who triumphed over the empires of Mexico and Peru. Everything was provided that experience in former invasions could suggest; chains for captives and the instruments of a forge; weapons of all kinds then in use, and bloodhounds as auxiliaries against the natives; ample stores of food, and, as a last resort, a drove of hogs, which would soon swarm in the favoring climate where the forests and maize furnished them abundant sustenance. It was a roving company of gallant freebooters in quest of a fortune; a romantic stroll of men whom avarice rendered ferocious, through unexplored regions; over unknown paths, wherever rumor might point to the residence of some chieftain with more than Peruvian wealth, or the ill-interpreted signs of the ignorant

natives might seem to promise gold. Often, at the resting-places, groups of listless adventurers clustered together to enjoy the excitement of desperate gaming. Religious zeal was also united with avarice; twelve priests, besides other ecclesiastics, accompanied the expedition. Ornaments for the service of mass were provided; every festival was to be kept, every religious practice to be observed. * * *

"The movements of the first season, from June to the end of October, 1539, brought the company from the bay of Spiritu Santo to the home of the Appalachians, east of the Flint River, and not far from the head of the bay of Appalachee. The names of the intermediate places cannot be identified. The march was tedious and full of dangers. The Indians were always hostile; the two captives of the former expedition escaped; a Spaniard, who had been kept in slavery from

the time of Narvaez (1528), could give no accounts of any land where there was silver or gold. The guides would purposely lead the Castilians astray and involve them in morasses, even though death under the fangs of the bloodhounds was the certain punishment. The company grew dispirited, and desired the governor to return, since the region opened no brilliant prospects. 'I will not turn back,' said Soto, 'till I have seen the poverty of the country with my own eyes.' The hostile Indians who were taken prisoners were in part put to death, in part enslaved. These were led in chains, with iron collars about their necks; their service was to grind the maize and to carry the baggage. An exploring party discovered Ochus, the harbor of Pensacola; and a message was transmitted to Cuba, desiring that in the ensuing year, supplies might be sent to that place."

From this time, disappointment and disaster tracked every step of the adventurers. Their inhumanity excited in the Indians an unappeasable thirst for vengeance. The young cavaliers took delight in cruelty and carnage. They cut off the hands of Indians for a pastime, and for the purpose of intimidating the tribes. Numbers of the natives were enslaved and made to serve as porters and guides. Their villages were wantonly set on fire and consumed. They were robbed of their stores of food and left to perish of starvation. These cruelties added to the difficulties which more and more thickly environed the Spaniards. Their native guides constantly led them astray. For three years they wandered in the interminable wilds, and suffered all that hunger, sickness, nakedness and hope deferred could inflict. The exaltation with which they started on their quest for gold was changed

to despondency, their gayety to melancholy, their hope to despair; but their resolution did not falter, nor their fortitude yield, nor their courage quail. The story of their adventures and their sufferings almost transcends belief. At last, in May, 1542, on the banks of the Washita River, on the western side of the Mississippi, Soto's stubborn pride and dauntless resolution succumbed to a malignant fever, and on the twenty-first of the month he died, without any of the kind and gentle ministrations which are so grateful in the last hours of mortals. "Thus," says Mr. Bancroft, "perished Ferdinand de Soto, the governor of Cuba, the successful associate of Pizarro. His miserable end was the more observed from the greatness of his former prosperity. His soldiers pronounced his eulogy by grieving for their loss; the priests chanted over his body the first requiems that were ever heard on the

waters of the Mississippi. To conceal his death, his body was wrapped in a mantle, and in the stillness of midnight was sunk in the middle of the stream."

CHAPTER III.

VIVID SKETCHES OF GREAT MEN.

Every chapter of Mr. Bancroft's History contains passages of vivid interest, but the propo sed limits of this sketch forbid their quotation. A long skip must be made, but I cannot forbear to give this electric flash upon the character of James I., "who was not destitute of shrewdness nor unskilled in rhetoric. He aimed at the reputation of a 'most learned clerk,' and so successfully that Bacon pronounced him incomparable for learning among kings; and Sully, who knew him well, esteemed him the wisest fool in Europe. At the mature age of thirty-six, the imbecile man, afflicted with an

ungainly frame and a timorous nature, escaped from austere supervision in Scotland to freedom of self-indulgence in the English court. His will, like his passions, was feeble, so that he could never carry out a wise resolution; and, in his love of ease, he had no fixed principles of conduct or belief. Moreover, cowardice, which was the core of his character, led him to be false; and he could vindicate deception and cunning as worthy of a king; but he was an awkward liar rather than a crafty dissembler."

In his chapter on "The Place of Puritanism in History," Mr. Bancroft has a theme which evidently enlists his theological and political sympathies. His treatment of the subject is fervid and picturesque. The entire chapter is full of interest, but only a few extracts can be given. "There are some," says the eloquent historian, "who love to enumerate the singularities of the

early Puritans. They were opposed to wigs; they could preach against veils; they denounced long hair; they disliked the cross in the banner as much as the people of Paris disliked the lilies of the Bourbons. They would not allow Christmas to be kept sacred; they called neither months, nor days, nor seasons, nor churches, nor inns by the names common in England; they revived Scripture names at christenings. The grave Romans legislated on the costume of men, and their senate could even stoop to interfere with the triumphs of the sex to which civic honors were denied; the fathers of New England prohibited frivolous fashions in their own dress; and their austerity, checking extravagance even in woman, frowned on her hoods of silk and her scarfs of tiffany, extended her sleeve to the wrist, and limited its greatest width to half an ell. The Puritans were formal and

precise in their manners; singular in the forms of their legislation. Every topic of the day found a place in their extemporaneous prayers, and infused a stirring interest into their long and frequent sermons. The courts of Massachusetts respected in practice the code of Moses; in New Haven the members of the constituent committee were called the seven pillars, hewn out for the house of wisdom. But these are only forms, which gave to the new faith a marked exterior. If from the outside peculiarities we look to the genius of the sect itself, Puritanism had two cardinal principles: Faith in the absolute sovereignty of God, whose will is perfect right; and the Equality of all who believe that His will is to be done. It was Religion struggling in, with and for the People; a war against tyranny and superstition. * * *

"The church existed independent of its pas-

tor, who owed his office to its free choice; the will of the majority was its law; and each one of the brethren possessed equal rights with the elders. The right, exercised by each congregation, of electing its own ministers, was in itself a moral revolution; religion was now with the people, not over the people. Puritanism exalted the laity. Every individual who had experienced the rapture of devotion, every believer who in moments of ecstasy had felt the assurance of the favor of God, was in his own eyes a consecrated person, chosen to do the noblest and godliest deeds. For him the wonderful counsels of the Almighty had appointed a Saviour; for him the laws of nature had been suspended and controlled, the heavens had opened, earth had quaked, the sun had veiled his face, and Christ had died and had risen again; for him prophets and apostles had revealed to the world the oracles and the

will of God. Before Heaven he prostrated himself in the dust; looking out upon mankind, how could he but respect himself whom God had chosen and redeemed? He cherished hope; he possessed faith; as he walked the earth his heart was in the skies. Angels hovered round his path, charged to minister to his soul; spirits of darkness vainly leagued together to tempt him from his allegiance. His burning piety could use no liturgy; his penitence revealed itself to no confessor. He knew no superior in holiness. He could as little become the slave of priestcraft as of a despot. He was himself a judge of the orthodoxy of the elders; and if he feared the invisible powers of the air, of darkness and of hell, he feared nothing on earth. Puritanism constituted not the Christian clergy, but the Christian people, the interpreter of the divine will; and the issue of Puritanism was popular sovereignty.

"The effects of Puritanism display its character still more distinctly. Ecclesiastical tyranny is of all kinds the worst; its fruits are cowardice, idleness, ignorance and poverty. Puritanism was a life-giving spirit; activity, thrift, intelligence followed in its train; and as for courage, a coward and a Puritan never went together. * * *

"Of all contemporary sects, the Puritans were the most free from credulity, and, in their zeal for reform, pushed their regulations to what some would consider a skeptical extreme. So many superstitions had been bundled up with every venerable institution of Europe that ages had not yet dislodged them all. The Puritans at once emancipated themselves from the thralldom to observances. They established a worship purely spiritual. They stood in prayer. To them the elements remained but wine and bread, and in communing they would not kneel.

They invoked no saints; they raised no altar; they adored no crucifix; they kissed no book; they asked no absolution; they paid no tithes; they saw in the priest nothing more sacred than a man; ordination was no more than an approbation of the officer, which might be expressed by the brethren just as well as by other ministers; the church, as a place of worship, was to them but a meeting-house; they dug no graves in consecrated earth; unlike their posterity, they married without a minister and buried their dead without a prayer. * * *

"Historians have loved to eulogize the manners and virtues, the glory and the benefits of chivalry. Puritanism accomplished for mankind far more. If it had the sectarian crime of intolerance, chivalry had the vices of dissoluteness. The knights were brave from gallantry of spirit; the Puritans from the fear of God. The knights obeyed

the law of honor; the Puritans hearkened to the voice of duty. The knights were proud of loyalty; the Puritans of liberty. The knights did homage to monarchs, in whose smile they beheld honor, whose rebuke was disgrace; the Puritans, in their disdain of ceremony, would not bow at the name of Jesus, nor bend the knee to the King of kings. Chivalry delighted in outward show, favored pleasure, multiplied amusements and degraded the human race by an exclusive respect for the privileged classes; Puritanism bridled the passions, commanded the virtues of self-denial, and rescued the name of man from dishonor. The former valued courtesy; the latter, justice. The former adorned society by graceful refinements; the latter founded national grandeur on universal education. The institutions of chivalry were subverted by the gradually increasing weight and knowledge and opulence of the industri-

ous classes; the Puritans, rallying upon those classes, planted in their hearts the undying principles of democratic liberty."

In describing the conduct of Charles I. in the chapter on "The Fall and Restoration of the Stuarts," Mr. Bancroft gives this noble passage:

"Treason against the state, on the part of its highest officers, is the darkest of human offences. Fidelity to the constitution is due from every citizen; in a monarch, the debt is enhanced, for the monarch is the hereditary and special favorite of the fundamental laws. The murderer, even where his victim is eminent for mind and character, destroys what time will repair; and, deep as is his guilt, society suffers but transiently from the transgression. But the king who conspires against the liberties of the people, conspires to subvert the most precious bequest of past ages, the dearest hope of future time; he would destroy

genius in its birth and enterprise in its sources, and sacrifice the prolific causes of intelligence and virtue to his avarice or his vanity, his caprices or his ambition; would rob the nation of its nationality, the individual of the prerogatives of man; would deprive common life of its sweets, by depriving it of its security, and religion of its power to solace, by subjecting it to supervision and control. His crime would not only enslave a present race of men, but forge chains for unborn generations. There can be no fouler deed."

In his characterization of Cromwell, Mr. Bancroft says: "All great men incline to fatalism, for their success is a mystery to themselves; and it was not entirely with hypocrisy that Cromwell professed himself the servant of Providence, borne along by irresistible necessity. * * *

"Cromwell was one whom even his ene-

mies cannot name without acknowledging his greatness. The farmer of Huntingdon, accustomed only to rural occupations, unnoticed till he was more than forty years old, engaged in no higher plots than how to improve the returns of his land and fill his orchard with choice fruit, of a sudden became the best officer in the British army, and the greatest statesman of his time; overturned the English constitution, which had been the work of centuries; held in his own grasp the liberties which formed a part of the nature of the English people, and cast the kingdoms into a new mould. Religious peace, such as England till now has never again seen, flourished under his calm meditation; justice found its way even among the remotest Highlands of Scotland; commerce filled the English marts with prosperous activity; his fleets rode triumphant in the West Indies; Nova Scotia submitted to his orders without a

struggle; the Dutch begged of him for peace as for a boon; Louis XIV. was humiliated; the Protestants of Piedmont breathed their prayers in security. His squadron made sure of Jamaica; he had strong thoughts of Hispaniola and Cuba; and, to use his own words, resolved 'to strive with the Spaniard for the mastery of all those seas.' The glory of the English was spread throughout the world: 'Under the tropic was their language spoke.'

"And yet his career was but an attempt to conciliate a union between his power and permanent public order; and the attempt was always unavailing, from the inherent impossibility growing out of the origin of his power. It was derived from the submission, not from the will, of the people; it came by the sword, not from the nation, nor from national usages. Cromwell saw the impracticability of a republic, and offered no excuse

for his usurpations but the right of the strongest to restore tranquility—the plea of tyrants and oppressors from the beginning of the world. * * *

"Seldom was there a less scrupulous or more gifted politician than Cromwell. But he was no longer a leader of a party. He had no party. A party cannot exist except by the force of common principles; it is truth, and truth only, that of itself rallies men together. Cromwell, the oppressor of the Independents, had ceased to respect principles; his object was the advancement of his family; his hold on opinion went no farther than the dread of anarchy, and the strong desire for order. If moderate and disinterested men consented to his power, it was to his power as high constable, engaged to preserve the public peace. He could not confer on his country a fixed form of government, for that required a concert with the national

affections which he was never able to gain. He had clear notions of public liberty, and he understood how much the English people are disposed to honor their representatives. Thrice did he attempt to connect his usurpation with the forms of representative government, and always without success."

One of the finest specimens of Mr. Bancroft's style when he is treating domestic themes, occurs in his description of the polity, the character and the condition of the founders of the colony of Connecticut:

"The charter of Connecticut secured to her an existence of unsurpassed tranquility. Unmixed popular power was safe under the shelter of severe morality; and beggary and crime could not thrive. From the first, the minds of the yeomanry were kept active by the constant exercise of the elective franchise; and, except under James II., there was no such thing in the land as a home

officer appointed by the English king. The government was in honest and upright hands; the strifes of rivalry never became heated; in the choice of magistrates, gifts of learning and genius were valued, but the state was content with virtue and single-mindedness; and the public welfare never suffered at the hands of plain men. * * *

"Industry enjoyed the abundance which it created. No great inequalities of condition excited envy or raised political feuds; wealth could display itself only in a larger house and a fuller barn. There was venison from the hills; salmon in their season, not less than shad, from the rivers; and sugar from the maple of the forest. For a foreign market little was produced beside cattle; and, in return for them, but few foreign luxuries stole in. Even so late as 1713, the number of seamen did not exceed one hundred and twenty. The soil had originally been justly

divided, or held as common property in trust for the public, and for new-comers. There was for a long time hardly a lawyer in the land. The husbandman who held his own plough and fed his own cattle was the great man of that day; no one was superior to the matron, who, with her busy daughters, kept the hum of the wheel incessantly alive, spinning and weaving every article of their dress. Life was uniform. The only revolution was from the time of sowing to the time of reaping; from the plain dress of the week to the more trim attire of Sunday. There was nothing morose in the Connecticut character. Frolic mingled with innocence; and the annual thanksgiving to God was, from primitive times, as joyous as it was sincere."

CHAPTER IV.

NOBLE STRUGGLES FOR LIBERTY.

Mr. Bancroft's narrative of the proceedings by Charles II. to deprive the colony of Massachusetts of its chartered liberties, stirs one's blood and excites his indignation. In 1679 it was determined to annul the charter and bring the colony under the rule of despotism. It was against fearful odds that Massachusetts entered into this struggle; but her brave sons did not quail. They met the danger as undauntedly then as, a hundred years later, they met their British foes at Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill. The king, astounded at the ability and fortitude exhibited by the colonists, himself shrank

from the contest, and tried to wheedle them out of their liberties. They were informed that if they would submit, the royal favor would be extended to them, and that the fewest alterations would be made in their charter consistent with the support of a royal government. At the same time a *quo warranto* was issued and Massachusetts was arraigned before an English tribunal, under judges holding their office at the pleasure of the monarch. The agents of the colony represented its condition as desperate. "Was it not safest for the colony to decline a contest, and throw itself upon the favor or forbearance of the king? Such was the theme of universal discussion; it entered into the prayers of families; it filled the sermons of the ministers; and, finally, Massachusetts resolved, in a manner that showed it to be distinctly the sentiment of the people, not to concede one liberty or one privilege which

was held by charter. If liberty was to receive its death-blow, better that it should die by the violence and injustice of others than by its own weakness."

The conclusions of the colonists as to their rights and duties were conceived in that lofty spirit which is inspired by love of liberty and devotion to God. "Ought the government of Massachusetts," they argued, "submit to the pleasure of the court as to alteration of their charter? Submission would be an offense against the majesty of Heaven; the religion of the people of New England and the court's pleasure cannot consist together. * * *

"The civil liberties of New England are part of the inheritance of their fathers; and shall we give that inheritance away? Is it objected that we shall be exposed to great sufferings? Better suffer than sin. It is better to trust the God of our fathers than to

put confidence in princes. If we suffer because we dare not comply with the will of men against the will of God, we suffer in a good cause, and shall be accounted martyrs in the next generation and at the great day."

These noble sentiments cannot be taken too deeply to heart by American freemen of this generation; nor can the legacy of freedom which those brave men left us be too highly prized or too ardently cherished. To think that such a people should be subjected to the insolence and the tyranny of a king whose character was so foul that the mere thought of it excites nausea in the stomach of every decent human being, is sufficient to make every self-respecting freeman rejoice in regicide.

The judicial proceedings against the colony were changed in the summer of 1684 to avoid certain legal obstacles, and the charter was adjudged to be forfeited. Thus fell the

charter which had been brought by the fleet of Winthrop to the shores of New England, and had been cherished with courage through every vicissitude. Gloomy forebodings overspread New England, but the courage of those brave old hearts did not wane. They trusted in themselves and in God, whose slow-grinding mills were already beginning to pulverize the despotism of the Stuarts.

The last chapter of the first volume of the history, which brings the narrative of events down to the great revolution of 1688 and the accession of William of Orange to the English throne, sums up the results thus far with felicity and power. "The emigration," says Mr. Bancroft, "of the fathers of these commonwealths [the American colonies], with the planting of the principles on which they rested, though, like the introduction of Christianity into Rome, but little regarded by contemporary writers, was the most

momentous event of the seventeenth century. The elements of our country, such as she exists to-day, were already there. * * * Nothing came from Europe but a free people. The people, separating itself from all other elements of previous civilization; the people, self confiding and industrious; the people wise by all traditions that favored its culture and happiness—alone broke away from European influence, and in the New World laid the foundations of our republic. Like Moses, as they said of themselves, they had escaped from Egyptian bondage to the wilderness, that God might there give them the pattern of the tabernacle. Like the favored evangelist, the exiles, in their western Patmos, listened to the angel that dictated the new gospel of freedom. Overwhelmed in Europe, popular liberty, like the fabled fountain of the sacred Arethusa, gushed forth profusely in remoter fields.

"Of the nations of the European world, the chief emigration was from that Germanic race most famed for the love of personal independence. The immense majority of American families were not of 'the high folk of Normandie,' but were of 'the low men,' who were Saxons. This is true of New England; it is true of the south. The Virginians were Anglo Saxons in the woods again, with the inherited culture and intelligence of the seventeenth century. 'The major part of the house of burgesses now consisted of Virginians that never saw a town.' The Anglo-Saxon mind, in its serenest nationality, neither distorted by fanaticism, nor subdued by superstition, nor wounded by a persecution, nor excited by new ideas, but fondly cherishing the active instinct for personal freedom, secure possession, and legislative power, such as belonged to it before the reformation, and existed independent of the

reformation, had made its dwelling place in the empire of Powhatan. * * *

"The colonists, including their philosophy in their religion, as the people up to that time had always done, were neither skeptics nor sensualists, but Christians. The school that bows to the senses as the sole interpreter of truth, had little share in colonizing our America. The colonists from Maine to Carolina, the adventurous companions of Smith, the proscribed Puritans that freighted the fleet of Winthrop, the Quaker outlaws that fled from jails with a Newgate prisoner as their sovereign—all had faith in God and in the soul. The system which had been revealed in Judea—the system which combines and perfects the symbolic wisdom of the Orient and the reflective genius of Greece—the system, conforming to reason, yet kindling enthusiasm; always hastening reform, yet always conservative; proclaiming

absolute equality among men, yet not suddenly abolishing the unequal institutions of society; guaranteeing absolute freedom, yet invoking the inexorable restrictions of duty; in the highest degree theoretical, and yet in the highest degree practical; awakening the inner man to a consciousness of his destiny, and yet adapted with exact harmony to the outward world; at once divine and humane —this system was professed in every part of our widely extended country and cradled our freedom. * * *

"The period through which we have passed shows why we are a free people; the coming period will show why we are a united people. We shall have no tales to relate of more adventure than in the early period of Virginia, none of more sublimity than of the pilgrims at Plymouth. But we are about to enter on a wider theatre; and, as we trace the progress of commercial am-

bition through events which shook the globe from the wilds beyond the Alleghanies to the ancient abodes of civilization in Hindostan, we shall still see that the selfishness of evil defeats itself, and God rules in the affairs of men."

CHAPTER V.

INDIAN WARS—OBJECT OF THE AUTHORS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

Mr. Bancroft's second volume takes a wide historical range, and covers many series of important events, but our quotations must be iimited. The descriptions of some of the occurrences which took place in New England during the French and Indian wars, are tragic beyond invention; they bear the stamp of faithful accounts of actual atrocities perpetrated by the barbarous foes of the colonists.

"Death hung on the frontier," says the historian. "The farmers, that had built their dwellings on the bank, just above the beauti-

ful meadows of Deerfield, had surrounded with pickets an enclosure of twenty acres, the village citadel. There were separate dwelling houses, likewise fortified by a circle of sticks of timber set upright in the ground. Their occupants knew, through the Mohawks, that danger was at hand. All that winter there was not a night but the sentinel was abroad; not a mother lulled her infant to rest without fearing that, before morning, the tomahawk might crush its skull. The snow lay four feet deep, when the clear, invigorating air of midwinter cheered the war party of about two hundred French and one hundred and forty-two Indians, who, with the aid of snow-shoes and led by Hertel de Rouville, had walked on the crust all the way from Canada. On the last night in February 1704, a pine forest near Deerfield gave them shelter till after midnight. When, at the approach of morning, the unfaithful sentinels

retired, the war-party entered within the palisades, which drifts of snow had made useless, and the war-whoop of the savages bade each family prepare for captivity or death. The village was set on fire, and all but the church and one dwelling house were consumed.

"Of the inhabitants, but few escaped: forty-seven were killed; one hundred and twelve, including the minister and his family, were made captives. One hour after sunrise, the party began its return to Canada. But who would know the horrors of that winter march through the wilderness? Two men starved to death. Did a young child weep from fatigue, or a woman totter from anguish under the burden of her own offspring, the tomahawk stilled complaint, or the infant was cast out upon the snow. Eunice Williams, the wife of the minister, had not forgotten her Bible; and, when they rested by the wayside, or at night made their

couch of branches of evergreen strewn on the snow, the savages allowed her to read it. Having but recently recovered from confinement, her strength soon failed. To her husband, who reminded her of the 'house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,' 'she justified God in what had happened.' The mother's heart rose to her lips as she commended her five captive children, under God, to their father's care; and then one blow from a tomahawk ended her sorrows. 'She rests in peace,' said her husband, 'and joy unspeakable and full of glory.' In Canada, no entreaties, no offers of ransom, could rescue his youngest daughter, then a child of but seven years old. Adopted into the village of the praying Indians near Montreal, she became a proselyte to the Catholic faith, and the wife of a Cahnewaga chief. When, after long years, she visited her friends at Deerfield, she appeared in an Indian dress;

and, making a short sojourn, in spite of a day of fast of a whole village, which assembled to pray for her deliverance, she returned to the fires of her wigwam and to the love of her Mohawk children.

From 1705 to 1707, the prowling Indian stealthily approached towns even in the heart of Massachusetts. Children, as they gambolled on the beach; mowers, as they swung the scythe; mothers, as they busied themselves about the household—fell victims to an enemy who was ever present where a garrison or a family ceased its vigilance, and disappeared after striking a blow.

"In 1708, after a war-council at Montreal, the French, under Des Chaillons and Hertel de Rouville, with Algonkin allies, ascended the St. Francis, and, passing by the White Mountains, having traveled near one hundred and fifty leagues, made their rendezvous at Winnipiseogee. There they failed to meet

the expected aid from the Abenakis, and, in consequence, were too feeble to attack Portsmouth; they therefore descended the Merrimack to the town of Haverhill, which was, at that time, a cluster of thirty cottages and log-cabins, embosomed in the primeval forests, near the tranquil Merrimack. In the center of the settlement stood a new meeting-house, the pride of the village. On the few acres of open land, the ripening Indian corn rose over the charred stumps of trees; on the north and the west the unbroken wilderness stretched beyond the White Mountains. On the twenty-ninth of August, evening prayers had been offered in each family, and the village had resigned itself to sleep.

That night the invaders slept quietly in the near forest. At daybreak they assumed the order of battle; Rouville addressed the soldiers, who, after their orisons, marched against the fort, raised the shrill yell, and

dispersed themselves through the village to their work of blood. The rifle rang; the cry of the dying rose. Benjamin Rolfe, the minister, was beaten to death; one Indian sunk a hatchet deep into the brain of his wife, while another dashed the head of his infant child against a stone. Thomas Hartshorn and two of his sons, attempting a rally, were shot; a third son was tomahawked. John Johnston was shot by the side of his wife; she fled into the garden, bearing an infant; was caught and murdered; but as she fell, she concealed her child, which was found after the massacre, clinging to her breast. Simon Wainwright was killed at the first fire. Mary, his wife, unbarred the door; with cheerful mien bade the savages enter; furnished them what they wished, and, when they demanded money, she retired as if to 'bring it,' and, gathering up all her children save one, succeeded in escaping.

"As the destroyers retired, Samuel Ayer, ever to be remembered in village annals, with a force which equaled but a thirteenth part of the invaders, hung on their rear—himself a victim, yet rescuing several from captivity.

"The day was advanced when the battle ended. The rude epitaph on the moss grown stone tells where the interment was made in haste; Rolfe, his wife and child, fill one grave; in the burial-ground of the village, an ancient mound marks the resting-place of the multitude of the slain."

The English revolution of 1688, which was the forerunner of the American revolution of 1776, formed an auspicious era in the history of England and of mankind. Henceforward the title of the king to the crown was bound up with the title of the aristocracy to their privileges, of the people to their liberties; it sprang from law, and it accepted an accountability to the nation—

accepted the right to resist tyranny, even by dethroning a dynasty. The fated period of arbitrary monarchy was come; it was denied to be a form of civil government. Nothing, it was held, can bind freemen to obey any government save their own agreement. Political power is a trust, and the breach of the trust dissolves the obligation to allegiance. The supreme power is the legislature to whose guardianship it has been sacredly and unalterably delegated. By the fundamental law of property, no taxes may be levied on the people but by their own authorized agents. These political principles were solidified into governmental axioms by the English revolution of 1688, and it was the attempts to deprive the colonies of the protection given to freemen by these principles that led to the American revolution of 1776 — the scope, spirit, philosophy and result of

which Mr. Bancroft sets forth with unusual force and eloquence:

"The authors of the American revolution avowed for their object the welfare of mankind, and believed that they were in the service of their own and of all future generations. Their faith was just; for the world of mankind does not exist in fragments, nor can a country have an insulated existence. All men are brothers; and all are bondsmen for one another. All nations, too, are brothers; and each is responsible for that federative humanity which puts the ban of exclusion on none. New principles of government could not assert themselves in one hemisphere without affecting the other. The very idea of the progress of an individual people, in its relation to universal history, springs from the acknowledged unity of the race. * * *

"To have asserted clearly the unity of mankind was the distinctive character of

the Christian religion. No more were the nations to be severed by the worship of exclusive deities. They were taught that all men are of one blood; that for all there is but one divine nature and but one moral law; and the renovating faith which made known the singleness of the race, embodied its aspirations, and guided its advancement. The tribes of Northern Europe, emerging freshly from the wild nurseries of nations, opened new regions to culture, commerce and refinement. The beams of the majestic temple, which antiquity had reared to its many gods, were already falling in; roving invaders, taking to their hearts the regenerating creed, became its intrepid messengers, and bore its symbols even to Iceland and Siberia. * * *

"While the world of mankind is accomplishing its nearer connection, it is advancing in the power of its intelligence. The

possession of reason is the engagement for that progress of which history keeps the record. The faculties of each individual mind are limited in their development; the reason of the whole strives for perfection, has been restlessly forming itself from the first moment of human existence, and has never met bounds to its capacity for improvement. The generations of men are not like the leaves on the trees, which fall and renew themselves without melioration or change; individuals disappear like the foliage and the flowers; the existence of our kind is continuous, and its ages are reciprocally dependent. * * *

"It is this idea of continuity which gives vitality to history. No period of time has a separate being; no public opinion can escape the influence of previous intelligence. We are cheered by rays from former centuries, and live in the sunny reflection of all

their light. What though thought is invisible, and, even when effective, seems as transient as the wind that drives the cloud! It is yet free and indestructible; can as little be bound in chains as the aspiring flame; and, when once generated, takes eternity for its guardian. We are the children and the heirs of the past, with which, as with the future, we are indissolubly linked together; and he that truly has sympathy with everything belonging to man, will, with his toils for posterity, blend affection for the times that are gone by, and seek to live in the life of the ages. It is by thankfully recognizing those ages as a part of the great existence in which we share, that history wins power to move the soul; she comes to us with tidings of that which for us still lives, of that which has become the life of our life; she embalms and preserves for us the life-blood

not of master-spirits only, but of generations. * * *

"From the intelligence that had been slowly ripening in the mind of cultivated humanity, sprung the American revolution, which organized social union through the establishment of personal freedom, and emancipated the nations from all authority not flowing from themselves. * * * It was the office of America to substitute for hereditary privilege the natural equality of man; for the irresponsible authority of a sovereign, a government emanating from the concord of opinion; and, as she moved forward in her high career, the multitude of every clime gazed toward her example with hopes of untold happiness, and all the nations of the earth learned the way to be renewed.

"The American revolution, essaying to unfold the principles which organized its

events, and bound to keep faith with the ashes of its heroes, was most radical in its character, yet achieved with such benign tranquility that even conservatism hesitated to censure. * * * The equality of all men was declared, personal freedom secured in its complete individuality, and common consent recognized as the only just origin of fundamental laws; so that in thirteen separate states, with ample territory for creating more, the inhabitants of each formed their own political institutions. By the side of the principle of the freedom of the individual and the freedom of the separate states, the noblest work of human intellect was consummated in a federal union; and that union put away every motive to its destruction by insuring to each successive generation the right to amend its constitution according to the increasing intelligence of the living people. Astonishing deeds throughout the

globe attended these changes. * * * For America, the period abounded in new forms of virtue and greatness. Fidelity to principle pervaded the masses; an unorganized people, of their own free will, suspended commerce by universal assent; poverty rejected bribes. Heroism, greater than that of chivalry, burst into action from lowly men; citizens, with their families, fled from their homes and wealth in towns, rather than yield to oppression. Battalions sprung up in a night from spontaneous patriotism; where eminent statesmen hesitated, the instinctive action of the multitude revealed the counsels of magnanimity; youth and genius gave up life freely for the liberties of mankind. A nation without union, without magazines and arsenals, without a treasury, without credit, without government, fought successfully against the whole strength and wealth of Great Brit-

ain; an army of veteran soldiers capitulated to insurgent husbandmen.

"Europe could not watch with indifference the spectacle. The oldest aristocracy of France, the proudest nobles of Poland, the bravest hearts of Germany, sent their representatives to act as the peers of plebeians, to die gloriously, or to live beloved, as the champions of humanity and freedom; Russia and the northern nations shielded the young republic by an armed neutrality; while the Catholic and feudal monarchies of France and Spain, children of the middle age, were wonderfully swayed to open the gates of futurity to the new empire of democracy; so that, in human affairs, God never showed more visibly his gracious providence and love."

CHAPTER VI.

WASHINGTON'S CAREER AND CHARACTER—TRIUMPH OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

The third volume of the history covers the period from 1763 (when Great Britain acquired possession, by treaty, of the French possessions in America, which she had already wrested from France by conquest) to 1774, when England took the step which alienated the colonies. The subject of the volume is the estrangement of America from Great Britain. This portion of American history is given in our school-books, and, so far as its salient points are concerned, it is so familiar to the reading public that it will not be dwelt upon here. The fourth volume treats

of the events which occurred between May, 1774, and July, 1776. On the tenth of May, 1774, which was the day of the accession of Louis XVI., the act closing the port of Boston reached the devoted town. The act transferred the board of customs to Marblehead and the seat of government to Salem. The king was confident that the slow torture which was to be applied to the inhabitants of Boston would constrain them to cry for mercy and promise unconditional obedience. Success in resistance could come only from an American union, which the king and his counselors did not believe to be possible. It was confidently asserted that the other colonies would not peril their own interests by supporting Massachusetts. Never were king and counselors more mistaken. As the news of Boston's suffering and fortitude spread through the land, the people of every colony rallied to her support. The hour of

the American revolution was come. The people of the continent obeyed one general impulse, as the earth in spring listens to the mandate of nature and without the appearance of effort bursts into life. The movement was quickened by the efforts made to intimidate its supporters. The arrival of British troops and British vessels of war in Boston aroused the people to a more firm-set purpose of resistance. A general congress was proposed; delegates were elected; and on September 5, 1774, the first American Congress met at Philadelphia. The current of events now moved with constantly increasing rapidity and momentum, and Mr. Bancroft develops the narrative with great amplitude, clearness and power. Lexington, Concord, Bunker Hill, the uprising of a great people, the convening of the Continental Congress, the election of Washington as commander-in-chief of the Continental army

follow swiftly and are described in the historian's most philosophical and picturesque style. His sketch of Washington will be read with delight by every lover of liberty:

"Washington was then [June 15, 1775] forty-three years of age. In stature he a little exceeded six feet; his limbs were sinewy and well-proportioned; his chest broad; his figure stately, blending dignity of presence with ease. His robust constitution had been tried and invigorated by his early life in the wilderness, the habit of occupation out of doors and rigid temperance; so that few equaled him in strength of arm, or power of endurance, or noble horsemanship. His complexion was florid; his hair dark brown; his head in its shape perfectly round. His broad nostrils seemed formed to give escape to scornful anger. The lines of his eyebrows were long and finely arched. His dark-blue eyes, which were deeply set, had an expres-

sion of resignation, and an earnestness that was almost pensiveness. His forehead was sometimes marked with thought, but never with inquietude; his countenance was pleasing and full of benignity.

"At eleven years old left to the care of an excellent but unlettered mother, he grew up without learning. Of arithmetic and geometry he acquired just knowledge enough to be able to practice measuring land; but all his instruction at school taught him not so much as the orthography or rules of grammar of his own tongue. His culture was altogether his own work; yet from early life he never seemed uneducated. At sixteen he went into the wilderness as a surveyor, and for three years continued the pursuit, where the forests trained him, in meditative solitude, to freedom and largeness of mind; and nature revealed to him her obedience to serene and silent laws. In

his intervals from toil he seemed always to be attracted to the society of the best men, and to be cherished by them. Fairfax, his employer, an Oxford scholar, already aged, became his fast friend. He read little, but with close attention. Whatever he took in hand he applied himself to with care; and his papers, which have been preserved, show how he almost imperceptibly gained the power of writing correctly, always expressing himself with clearness and directness, often with a happy choice of language, and with grace.

"When the frontiers on the West became disturbed, he at nineteen was commissioned an adjutant-general with the rank of major. At twenty-one he went as the envoy of Virginia to the council of Indian chiefs on the Ohio, and to the French officers near Lake Erie. Fame waited upon him from his youth; and no one of his colony was so

much spoken of. He conducted the first military expedition from Virginia that crossed the Alleghanies. Braddock selected him as an aid, and he was the only man who came out of the disastrous defeat near the Monongahela with increased reputation, which extended to England. * * *

"Courage was so natural to him that it was hardly spoken of; no one ever at any moment of his life discovered in him the least shrinking in danger; and he had a hardihood of daring which escaped notice, because it was enveloped by calmness and wisdom. * * *

"His faculties were so well balanced and combined that his constitution, free from excess, was tempered evenly with all the elements of activity, and his mind resembled a well-ordered commonwealth; his passions, which had the intensest vigor, owned allegiance to reason; and, with all the fiery quick-

ness of his spirit, his impetuous and massive will was held in check by consummate judgment. He had in his composition a calm which gave him in moments of highest excitement the power of self-control, and enabled him to excel in patience, even when he had most cause for disgust. Washington was offered a command when there was little to bring out the unorganized resources of the continent but his own influence, and authority was connected with the people by the most frail, most attenuated, scarcely discernible threads; yet, vehement as was his nature, impassioned as was his courage, he so restrained his ardor that he never failed continuously to exert that influence, and never exerted it so sharply as to break its force.

"His faculty of secrecy, in which he was unsurpassed, had the character of prudent reserve, not of concealment. His great

natural power of vigilance had been developed by his life in the wilderness.

"His understanding was lucid and his judgment accurate, so that his conduct never betrayed hurry or confusion. No detail was too minute for his personal inquiry and continued supervision; and at the same time he comprehended events in their widest aspects and relations. He never seemed above the object that engaged his attention, and he was always equal, without an effort, to the solution of the highest questions affecting the destiny of mankind, even when there existed no precedents to guide his decision. In the perfection of the reflective powers he had no peer.

"In this way he never drew to himself admiration for the possession of any one quality in excess, he never made in council any one suggestion that was sublime but impracticable, never in action took to himself the praise or the blame of undertakings astonishing in

conception, but beyond his means of execution. It was the most wonderful accomplishment of this man that, placed upon the largest theatre of events, at the head of the greatest revolution in human affairs, he never failed to observe all that was possible, and at the same time to bound his endeavors by that which was possible.

"A slight tinge in his character, perceptible only to the close observer, revealed the region from which he sprung, and he might be described as the best specimen of manhood as developed in Virginia; but his qualities were so faultlessly proportioned that the whole people rather claimed him as its choicest representative, the most complete expression of all its attainments and aspirations. He studied his country and conformed to it, not from calculation, but from a sincere, ever-active benevolence and sympathy. His countrymen felt that he was

the best type of America; they lived in his life, and made his success and his praise their own.

"Profoundly impressed with confidence in God's providence, and exemplary in his respect for the forms of public worship, no philosopher of the eighteenth century was more firm in the support of freedom of religious opinion, none more remote from bigotry; but belief in God and trust in his overruling power formed the essence of his character. Divine wisdom not only illumines the spirit, it inspires the will. Washington was a man of action; his creed appears in his life; professions burst from him very rarely, and only at those great moments of crisis in the fortunes of his country when earth and heaven seemed actually to meet, and his emotions became too intense for suppression; but his whole being was one continued act of faith in the eternal, intelligent, moral order of the

universe. Integrity was so completely the law of his nature that a planet would sooner have shot from its sphere than he have departed from his uprightness, which was so constant that it often seemed to be almost impersonal. 'His integrity was the most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known,' writes Jefferson, 'no motives of interest or consanguinity, of friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decision.'

"They say of Giotto that he introduced goodness into the art of painting; Washington carried it with him to the camp and the cabinet, and established a new criterion of human greatness. The purity of his will confirmed his fortitude; and, as he never faltered in his faith in virtue, he stood fast by that which he knew to be just; free from illusions; never dejected by the apprehension of the difficulties and perils that went before him, and drawing the promise of success

from the justice of his cause. Hence he was persevering, leaving nothing unfinished; devoid of all taint of obstinacy in his firmness; seeking and gladly receiving advice, but immovable in his devotedness to right.

"Of a 'retiring modesty and habitual reserve,' his ambition was no more than the consciousness of power, and was subordinate to his sense of duty; he took the foremost place, for he knew from inborn magnanimity that it belonged to him, and he dared not withhold the service required of him; so that, with all his humility, he was by necessity the first, though never for himself or for private ends. He loved fame, the approval of coming generations, the good opinion of his fellow-men of his own time, and he desired to make his conduct coincide with their wishes; but not fear of censure, not the prospect of applause, could tempt him to swerve from rectitude, and the praise which he coveted

was the sympathy of that moral sentiment which delights in uprightness.

"There have been soldiers who have achieved mightier victories in the field, and made conquests more nearly corresponding to the boundlessness of selfish ambition; statesmen who have been connected with more startling upheavals of society; but it is the greatness of Washington that in public trusts he used power solely for the public good; that he was the life and moderator and stay of the most momentous revolution in human affairs, its moving impulse and its restraining power. Combining the centripetal and the centrifugal forces in their utmost strength and in perfect relations, with creative grandeur of instinct he held ruin in check, and renewed and perfected the institutions of his country. Finding the colonies disconnected and dependent, he left them such a united and well-ordered common-

wealth as no visionary had believed to be possible. So that it has been truly said: 'He was as fortunate as great and good.'

"This also is the praise of Washington: that never in the tide of time has any man lived who had in so great a degree the almost divine faculty to command the trust of his fellowmen and rule the willing. Wherever he became known, in his family, his neighborhood, his county, his native state, the continent, the camp, civil life, among the common people, in foreign courts, throughout the civilized world, and even among the savages, he beyond all other men had the confidence of his kind.

"Washington saw at a glance the difficulties of the position to which he had been chosen. * * * He knew that he must depend for success on a steady continuance of purpose in an imperfectly united continent, and on his personal influence over separate

and half-formed governments, with most of which he was wholly unacquainted. He foresaw a long and arduous struggle; but a secret consciousness of his power bade him not to fear; and he never admitted the thought of sheathing his sword or resigning his command till the work of vindicating American liberty should be done. To his wife he unbosomed his inmost mind: 'I hope my undertaking this service is designed to answer some good purpose. I rely confidently on that Providence which has hitherfore preserved and been bountiful to me.'

"His acceptance changed the aspect of affairs. John Adams, looking with complacency upon 'the modest and virtuous, the amiable, generous and brave general,' as the choice of Massachusetts, said: 'This appointment will have a great effect in cementing the union of these colonies. The general is one of the most important characters of the

world; upon him depend the liberties of America. All hearts turned with affection toward Washington. This is he who was raised up to be, not the head of a party, but the father of his country."

From this point the history o. the United States is so familiar to the American people that further quotations from the narrative portions of Mr. Bancroft's great work (which I wish was owned and read by every intelligent family in the United States) will be foregone. His sixth volume is devoted to the history of "The Formation of the Constitution of the United States of America." It is to be feared that although this volume is in many respects the most valuable portion of Mr. Bancroft's history, it is the volume which will be least read.

In presenting his subject, the historian says:

"The order of time brings us to the most

cheering act in the political history of mankind, when thirteen republics, of which at least three reached from the sea to the Mississippi, formed themselves into one federal commonwealth. There was no revolt against the past, but a persistent and healthy progress. The sublime achievement was the work of a people led by statesmen of earnestness, perseverance and public spirit, instructed by the widest experience in the forms of representative government, and warmed by that mutual love which proceeds from ancient connection, harmonious effort in perils, and common aspirations."

The Constitution having been evolved and adopted, Washington having been elected President of the Union, and all things being in readiness to organize the government, Mr. Bancroft says:

"The philosophy of the people of the United States was neither that of optimism

nor of despair. Believing in the justice of 'the Great Governor of the world,' and conscious of their own honest zeal in the cause of freedom and mankind, they looked with astonishment at their present success and at the future with unclouded hope.

"The election to the presidency found Washington prepared with a federal policy, which was the result of long meditation. He was resolved to preserve freedom; never to transcend the powers delegated by the constitution; even at the cost of life to uphold the union, a sentiment which in him had a tinge of anxiety from his thorough acquaintance with what Grayson called 'the southern genius of America;' to restore the public finances; to establish in the foreign relations of the country a thoroughly American system; and to preserve neutrality in the impending conflicts between nations in Europe.

"Across the Atlantic Alfieri cried out to him: 'Happy are you who have for the sublime and permanent basis of your glory, the love of country demonstrated by deeds.'

"On the fourteenth of April (1789) he received the official announcement of his recall to the public service, and was at ten o'clock on the morning of the sixteenth on his way. Though reluctant 'in the evening of life to exchange a peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties,' he bravely said: 'Be the voyage long or short, although I may be deserted by all men, integrity and firmness shall never forsake me.'

"But for him the country could not have achieved its independence; but for him it could not have formed its union; and but for him it could not have set the federal government in successful motion. His journey to New York was one continued march of triumph. All the way he was met with

addresses from the citizens of various towns, from societies, universities and churches.

"On the thirtieth, the day appointed for the inauguration, Washington, being fifty-seven years, two months, and eight days old, was ceremoniously received by the two houses in the hall of the senate. Stepping out to the middle compartment of a balcony, which had been raised in front of it, he found before him a dense throng, extending to Broad street and filling Wall street to Broadway. All were hushed as Livingston, the chancellor of the state, administered the oath of office; but when he cried, 'Long live George Washington, President of the United States!' the air was rent with huzzas, which were repeated as Washington bowed to the multitude.

"Then returning to the senate chamber, with an aspect grave almost to sadness, and a voice deep and tremulous, he addressed

the two houses, confessing his distrust of his own endowments and his inexperience in civil administration. The magnitude and difficulty of the duties to which his country had called him, weighed upon him so heavily that he shook as he proceeded: "It would be peculiarly improper to omit, in this official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who presides in the councils of nations, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States a government instituted by themselves. No people can be bound to acknowledge the invisible hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency. There exists in the economy of nature an indissoluble union

between an honest and magnanimous policy and public prosperity. Heaven can never smile on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right. The preservation of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment intrusted to the American people.

"At the close of the ceremony the president and both branches of congress were escorted to the church of St Paul, where the chaplain of the senate read prayers suited to the occasion, after which they all attended the president to his mansion.

"Every one without exception, so reports the French minister to his government, appeared penetrated with veneration for the illustrious chief of the republic. The humblest was proud of the virtues of the man who was to govern him. Tears of joy

were seen to flow in the hall of the senate, at church, and even in the streets, and no sovereign ever reigned more completely in the hearts of his subjects than Washington in the hearts of his fellow-citizens. Nature, which had given him the talent to govern, distinguished him from all others by his appearance. He had at once the soul, the look and the figure of a hero. He never appeared embarrassed at homage rendered him, and in his manners he had the advantage of joining dignity to great simplicity.

"In the same moments of the fifth day of May, 1789, when these words were reported, the ground was trembling beneath the arbitrary governments of Europe as Louis XVI. proceeded to open the states-general of France. The day of wrath, against which Leibnitz had warned the monarchs of Europe, was beginning to break, and its judgments were to be the more terrible for the long

delay of its coming. The great Frederick, who alone of them all had lived and toiled for the good of his land, described the degeneracy and insignificance of his fellow-rulers with cynical scorn. Not one of them had a surmise that the only sufficient reason for the existence of a king lies in his usefulness to the people. * * * The monarchs, whose imbecility or excesses had brought the doom of death on arbitrary power, were not only unfit to rule, but, while their own unlimited sovereignty was stricken with death, they knew not how to raise up statesmen to take their places. Well-intentioned friends of mankind burned with indignation, and even the wise and prudent were incensed by the conscious endurance of wrong; while the lowly classes, clouded by despair, were driven sometimes to admit the terrible thought that religion, which is the poor man's consolation and defence, might be but an

instrument of government in the hands of their oppressors. There was no relief for the nations but through revolution, and their masters had poisoned the weapons which revolution must use.

"In America a new people had risen up without king, or princes, or nobles, knowing nothing of tithes and little of landlords, the plough being for the most part in the hands of free holders of the soil. They were more sincerely religious, better educated, of serener minds, and of purer morals than the men of any former republic. By calm meditation and friendly councils they had prepared a constitution which, in the union of freedom with strength and order, excelled every one known before; and which secured itself against violence and revolution by providing a peaceful method for every needed reform. In the happy morning of their existence as one of the powers of the world, they had

chosen justice for their guide; and while they proceeded on their way with well-founded confidence and joy, all the friends of mankind invoked success on the unexampled endeavor to govern states and territories of imperial extent as one federal republic."

Here we bid adieu to Mr. Bancroft's great historical work. It is earnestly to be hoped that our presentation of it will inspire in many readers a desire to possess it, to study it, and to appreciate its inestimable value to every lover of American liberty.

In next week's *Ledger* we shall give an account of one of the most interesting portions of Mr. Bancroft's literary career.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. BANCROFT'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEW YORK LEDGER.

The popularity which Edward Everett won among the masses of the people by his "Mount Vernon Papers" and other contributions to the New York *Ledger*, which were continued to the time of his death, made a deep impression on Mr. Bancroft's mind. In the sketch of Everett which he wrote for the *Ledger*, he referred in eloquent language to the "Mount Vernon Papers," saying: "His [Mr. Everett's] zeal in this cause led him to accept the munificent invitation of the *Ledger*, and when he had in that way become accustomed to discourse to a cloud of listen-

ers whose number was incalculable, his love of sympathy assisted to make that journal his favorite way of access to the public.

Mr. Bancroft was acutely conscious of the value of an opportunity to "discourse to a cloud of listeners whose number was incalculable." He wrote to Mr. Robert Bonner, then the proprietor and editor of the *Ledger*, and, after referring to Mr. Everett's contribution, suggested that he himself could furnish articles for the *Ledger* of popular interest. This led to his engagement as a contributor to the *Ledger*, and he soon sent in, as his first contribution, an article, in three parts, entitled "Oliver Hazard Perry and the Battle of Lake Erie."

I well remember that article. The manuscript was rendered so illegible by numberless erasures and interlineations that the compositors and the foreman in the printing-office could not read it, and I was obliged

to decipher and rewrite it before the article could be put in type. It was written on sheets of paper about eight inches long and six inches wide. In the first draft four lines were written, widely apart, on each page. In the completed article hardly one of the original significant words were left, and all manner of interlineations were scrawled upon the page, often without any mark to indicate the order in which they were to follow one another. It was interesting to trace the changes which a phrase underwent from its first expression to the last finishing touch which set the stamp of superlative excellence upon it. Original words would be stricken out and synonyms substituted. Then the substitutes would be eraced, and new synonyms introduced, or the thought would be cast in a new verbal mold. These substitutes and changes were repeated over and over, and again and again, and in every instance

the new word or the new transposition would be an improvement; and so the work went on, until the author's taste and judgment were satisfied, and he was conscious of having reached the climax of felicity and clearness in the expression of his thoughts. I never think of that wretched manuscript without being reminded of Mr. Bancroft's declaration, in the preface of his history, that "there is no end to the difficulty in choosing language which will awaken in the reader the very same thought that was in the mind of the writer. In the form of expression, many revisions are hardly enough to assure strict correctness and propriety."

No wonder it took such a painstaking writer fifty years to complete his monumental history.

Every one of Mr. Bancroft's contributions to the *Ledger* is written in his best style. His sketch of "Oliver Hazard Perry and

Battle of Lake Erie" is a fine specimen of literary art. His translucent narrative of the way in which Perry overcame the seemingly insurmountable obstacles which he encountered, and his vivid description of the battle, bring out the matchless skill, the unyielding fortitude and the dauntless courage of the young hero in a manner to excite emotions of sympathy and exultation in every American heart. What could be finer or more touching than this closing paragraph:

"The personal conduct of Perry throughout the 10th of September [the day of the battle] was perfect. His keenly sensitive nature never interfered with his sweetness of manner, his fortitude, the soundness of his judgment, the promptitude of his decision. In a state of impassioned activity, his plans were wisely framed, were instantly modified as circumstances changed, and were

executed with entire coolness and self-possession. The mastery of the lakes, the recovery of Detroit and the far West, the capture of the British army in the peninsula of upper Canada, were the immediate fruits of his success. The imagination of the American people was taken captive by the singular incidents of a battle in which everything seemed to have flowed from the personal prowess of one man; and whenever he came the multitude went out to bid him welcome. Washington Irving, the chosen organ as it were of his country, predicted his ever-increasing fame. Rhode Island cherishes his glory as her own; Erie keeps the tradition that its harbor was his ship-yard, its forests the storehouse for the frames of his chief vessels, its houses the hospitable shelter of the wounded among his crews; Cleveland graces her public square with a statue of the hero, wrought of purest marble, and

looking out upon the scene of his glory; the tale follows the emigrant all the way up the Straits, and to the head of Lake Superior. Perry's career was short and troubled; he lives in the memory of his countrymen, clothed in perpetual youth, just as he stood when he first saw that his efforts were crowned with success, and could say in his heart: 'WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY, AND THEY ARE OURS.'"

Mr. Bancroft's sketch of "A DAY WITH LORD BYRON" has unique and precious qualities. What other man of world-wide literary fame, recently living among us in this year 1891, could, in the flush of his manhood, have passed a day with Lord Byron who died sixty-seven years ago? Mr. Bancroft was in his twenty-second year on that May morning in 1822, when he passed a day with Lord Byron at Monte Nero. His imagination was exalted, his feelings were

animated, his perception was quickened, his observation was keen and comprehensive. His account of Byron's conversation, his description of Countess Giuccioli, then in the heyday of her beauty and fascination, and his subtle and philosophical setting-forth of the whole unique and picturesque scene, constitute a chapter of literary reminiscence of the highest interest and value.

In his sketch of Edward Everett, written immediately after the death of that distinguished scholar, orator and statesman, Mr. Bancroft's heart sometimes overmasters his mind. The opening sentence—"In the death of Edward Everett I have lost the oldest friend that remained to me"—sets the pitch and strikes the keynote of the article. The sketch exhibits abundant evidence that on its preparation Mr. Bancroft lavished the wealth of his genius, his accomplishments and his affections. In all literature there is

no finer tribute, by a historian of universal fame, to a departed friend who was himself a peer of the most gifted and accomplished men of his time.

The essay on Washington, which was Mr. Bancroft's last contribution to the New York *Ledger*, is the crowning literary effort of his life. This subject is one on which he had meditated for more than sixty years, and of which he had written much. We have already given the sketch of Washington written fifty years ago, in which Mr. Bancroft delineates him as he stood before the world when he was appointed commander-in-chief of the American armies in 1775. If the reader will compare that sketch with the one which was writen for the New York *Ledger*, he will have no difficulty in perceiving that the *Ledger* sketch is the historical sketch come to maturity, amplified, strengthened and enriched with the accumulated

experience, intelligence, philosophy and reflection of half a century. It is, in truth, a wonderful piece of work. It is, in every respect, a fitting tribute to him whose "name, descending with all time, spreading over the whole earth, and uttered in all the languages belonging to the tribes and races of men, will forever be pronounced with affectionate gratitude by every one in whose breast there shall arise an aspiration for human rights and human liberty." *

* From Daniel Webster's speech at the dinner in honor of Washington's centennial birthday, at Washington, February 22, 1832.

THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE.

CHAPTER I.

IN the last weeks of 1812, Oliver Hazard Perry, a lieutenant in the United States Navy, then twenty-seven years of age, despairing of a sea-going vessel, sent to the Secretary of the Navy "a tender of his services for the Lakes." Tired of inactivity, he was quickened by the fame which men even younger than himself had just gained on the

ocean. At that time, he held the command of a flotilla of gun-boats in the harbor of Newport. "Possessing an ardent desire to meet the enemies of his country," and hoping one day to lead to battle the able and brave men who were at that time under his orders, he took "unwearied pains to prepare them for such an event," training them to the use of small arms, the exercise of the great guns, and every war-like service on shipboard.

The authority of Commodore Chauncey, who took charge in person of the operations on Lake Ontario, extended to all the upper lakes; he received Perry's application with delight, and accepted it with alacrity. "You," thus the veteran wrote to the impatient young man—"you are the very person that I want for a service in which you may gain reputation for yourself and honor for your country." "The situation will suit you exactly," wrote the friend who

from Washington announced to him that he was ordered on duty to Lake Erie; "you may expect warm fighting and a portion of honor."

His sweet disposition, cheerfulness and modest courage, his intuitive good judgment and quickness of will, had endeared him to his subordinates; and one hundred and forty-nine of them, officers, men and boys, for the most part like himself natives of Rhode Island, volunteered to go with him in the dead of winter on the unknown service.

Receiving his orders on the 17th of February, 1813, on that very day he sent forward one-third of the volunteers under sailing-master Almy, as many more on the 19th, under sailing-master Champlin, the rest on the 21st, under sailing-master Taylor; and on the 22nd, delivering over his command in Newport, he began the journey across the country, took with him from his father's

house his brother Alexander, a boy of twelve, met Chauncey at Albany, and pursuing his way in part through the wilderness, he arrived on the 3d of March at Sackett's Harbor. The command on Lake Ontario was important, and to its chief officer was paramount. In consequence of a prevailing rumor of an intended attack by the British on that station to destroy the squadron and the vessels on the stocks, Chauncey detained Perry and all his old companions for a fortnight; and one-third of those companions he never let go from his own ships on Lake Ontario.

Not till the 16th of March was Perry permitted to leave Sackett's Harbor. On the 24th he reached Buffalo; the next day was given to an inspection of the navy-yard at Black Rock. On the 26th, Perry set out in a sleigh over the frozen lake, and on the following afternoon he reached the harbor of

Erie. There he found that the keels of two brigs had been laid, and three gun-boats nearly finished by New York mechanics, under the direction of Noah Brown as master-shipwright, but no precautions for defense had been taken; not a musket was employed to guard against a sudden attack of the enemy, nor had the ice been used for the transportation of cannon from Buffalo. The supervising power of the young commander was at once exerted. Before night he organized a guard out of the villagers of Erie, ordered sailing-master Dobbins to repair to Buffalo to bring up forty seamen, muskets, power, and, if possible, cannon, and wrote to the navy agent at Pittsburg to hasten the movements of a party of shipwrights on their way from Philadelphia.

The country expected Perry to change the whole course of the war in the West, by obtaining the command of the water, which

the British as yet possessed without dispute. The want of that supremacy had lost Hull and Winchester and their forces, had left, to the British, Detroit and Michilimacinac and the Northwest, and still impeded all the purposes of Harrison. The route from Dayton in Ohio, to the lake, was so difficult that the line of road through the forest and prairies could be traced by the wrecks of wagons clinging with tenacity to the rich, miry soil; while the difficulties of transportation by land along the lake shore were insurmountable. Yet to create a superior naval force on Lake Erie, it was necessary to bring sails, cordage, cannon, powder, military stores, from a distance of five hundred miles through a region of which a considerable part was uninhabited.

Under the cheering influence of Perry, the work proceeded with harmonious diligence. He was the central point of confidence, for

he turned everything to account. The white and the black oak and the chestnut of the neighboring woods, often cut down on the day on which they were used, furnished the frames of the vessels; the outside planks were of oak alone, the decks of pine. To eke out the iron, every scrap was gathered from the village smithies and welded together. Of blacksmiths, but two came from Philadelphia; others were taken from the militia, who were called out as a guard. Taylor having on the 30th of March arrived from Sackett's Harbor with twenty officers and men, Perry left him for a few days in command, and, by a hurried visit to Pittsburgh, quickened the movements on which he depended for more artificers, for canvas, muskets, small guns, shot and balls.

On the 3d day of May, the gun-boats were launched; and at sunset of the 23d, the brigs, each of one hundred and forty-one

feet in length, of five hundred tons burden, pierced for twenty guns, were got ready for launching. Just at that moment, Perry received information that Fort George, the British post at the outlet of Niagara, was to be attacked by the American Army, in concert with the fleet on Lake Ontario. As soon as night closed in, he threw himself into a four-oared open boat; through darkness, and against squalls and head winds, reached Buffalo the next day, and on the evening of the 25th joined Chauncey as a volunteer.

"No person on earth could at this time be more welcome," said Chauncey to the young hero, whose coming was unexpected.

Perry was taken to counsel on the best mode of landing the troops, and rendered essential aid in their debarkation, winning general applause for his judgment, gallantry and alacrity. The official report declares

that "he was present at every point where he could be useful, under showers of musketry."

He escaped unhurt, and turned the capture of Fort George to account for his duty on Lake Erie. The British, being driven from both banks of the Niagara, Perry could remove from Black Rock the public vessels which had hitherto been confined there by Canadian batteries. Of these, the largest was the *Caledonia*, which Lieutenant Elliott had captured from the British in the previous year. The others were three small schooners and a sloop, trading vessels, purchased for the government, and fitted out as gunboats by Henry Eckford of New York. They were laden with all the naval stores at Black Rock, and by aid of oxen, seamen, and a detachment of two hundred soldiers, were tracked against the vehement current.

It took a fortnight of almost incredible

fatigue to bring them up to Buffalo, where danger began. The little flotilla had altogether but eight guns; Finnis, a skillful and experienced officer, who still commanded the British squadron, was on the watch, with a force five or six times as great. But Perry, by vigilance and promptness, escaped, and in the evening of the 18th of June, just as the British squadron hove in sight, he brought his group of gun-boats into the harbor of Erie.

The incessant exertion of all his faculties, night watching and unending care, wore upon Perry's frame; but there could be no pause in his efforts, for there was no end to his difficulties. His example sustained the spirit of the workmen; one-fifth of them were sick, but the work was kept up all day and all night by the rest, who toiled on without a murmur, and not one deserted. The brig over which Perry was to raise his flag,

was, by the Secretary of the Navy, named *Lawrence*, in honor of the gallant officer who could die in his country's service, but could not brook defeat; the other, equal to it in size and strength, was called the *Niagara*. By the 10th of July all the vessels were equipped, and could have gone out in a day after the reception of their crews; but there were barely men enough for one of the brigs. All recruits were furnished, not directly from Philadelphia, as a thoughtful Secretary would have ordered, but with much loss of time, roundabout, by way of Sackett's Harbor and through Chauncey, who was under a perpetual temptation to detain the best on Lake Ontario.

On the 20th of July, the British, now commanded by the veteran Barclay, rode in triumph off the bar of Erie. Perry bent his eyes longingly on the East; he watched the coming of every mail, of every traveler, as

the harbinger of the glad tidings that men were on the way. "Give me men," he wrote to Chauncey, "and I will acquire honor and glory, both for you and myself, or perish in the attempt. Think of my situation; the enemy within striking distance, my vessels ready, and I obliged to bite my fingers with vexation for want of men. I know you will send them as soon as possible, yet a day appears an age."

On the 23rd, Champlin arrived with a re-inforcement of seventy persons, but they were "a motley set of negroes, soldiers and boys." Chauncey repelled all complaints: "I have yet to learn," said he, "that the color of the skin can affect a man's qualifications or usefulness. I have nearly fifty blacks on board of this ship, and many of them are among my best men." Meantime, Perry declared himself "pleased to see anything in the shape of a man." But his numbers were

still incomplete. "My vessels," he again wrote, "are all ready; our sails are bent, Barclay has been bearding me for several days. I long to have at him; he shows no disposition to avoid the contest."

Perry had not in his character one grain of envy. Impatient as a spirited race-horse to win the palm in the contest for glory, no one paid a heartier or more genial tribute to the merit of every other officer, even where, like Morris, a junior officer received promotion over his head. He now invited Chauncey himself to come up with sufficient men, beat the British on Lake Erie, and returned to crush them on Lake Ontario. In his zeal for his country and the service, he subdued his own insatiable thirst for honor. Meantime he suffered most keenly from his compulsory inactivity, for letters from the Secretary of the Navy required his active co-operation with the army; and when he explained to

Harrison the cause of delay, the Secretary chid him for letting his weakness be known.

The harbor of Erie is a beautiful expanse of water, offering shelter to navies of merchantmen, and would be the best on the lake but for its bar. It remained to lift the armed brigs over the shallow, and it was to be done, as it were, in the presence of an enemy. Success required secrecy and dispatch.

On the 1st of August, the British squadron disappeared; on the instant Perry seized the opportunity to effect the dangerous achievement. Camels had been provided to lift the brigs; the lake was lower than usual, but the weather was still. The guns of the *Lawrence*, all loaded and shotted, were whipped out and landed on the beach; and on the morning of the 2nd, the camels were applied.

On the first experiment the timbers yielded a little to the strain, and the camels required

to be sunk a second time. From daylight on the 2nd of August to the 4th, Perry, whose health had already suffered, was constantly on the alert, without sleep or rest; his example heartened his men.

Who would complain when their commander bore so much? After toiling all day on the 2nd, all the next night, the next day, and again another night, the *Lawrence*, at daylight on the 4th, was fairly over the bar. On the 5th, the *Niagara* was got over at the first attempt.

"Thank God," wrote Perry, "the other sloop-of-war is over; in a few hours I shall be after the enemy, who is now making off."

Ill-provided as he was with men and officers, he gave chase to the British; but his daring was vain; they retreated to Malden, and he returned to anchor off Erie.

Till the new ship which the British were equipping at Malden should be ready, Perry

had the superiority, and he used it to lade his vessels with military stores for the army near Sandusky; but for a battle on the lake he needed officers as well as seamen.

"I have been on the station," he could say, "for five months without an officer of the least experience, except one sailing-master."

Just then a midshipman arrived with a letter that Lieutenant Elliott, soon promoted to a commander, was on the way with eighty men and several officers, and a vessel was at once hurried off to bring them up. But a letter also came to Perry from Chauncey, marked in its superscription and in every line by impatience, if not by insult. Perry was justly moved by its tone; but after complaint, remonstrance and further letters, he acted like "an officer whose first duty is to sacrifice all personal feelings to his public duties."

Elliott, on his arrival, took command of

the *Niagara;* and Perry, with a generosity that was natural to him, allowed him to select for his own ship the best of the men who came with him.

On the 12th, Perry having traced his plan of battle in case of attack, ranged his squadron in a double column, and sailed for the upper end of the lake. Arriving off Cunningham Island, one of the enemy's schooners appeared in sight, was chased, and escaped capture only by disappearing at nightfall among the islands.

On the evening of the 19th, as the squadron lay off Sandusky, General Harrison came on board the *Lawrence* with Cass, McArthur, Gains and Croghan. At the same time came six-and-twenty chiefs of the Shawnees, Wyandots and Delawares, by whose influence it was hoped to detach the Indians of the Northwest from the British service. Between Harrison and Perry the happiest

spirit of concert prevailed. The general pointed out to him the excellence of the harbor of Put-in-Bay; which became his anchoring ground, after he had landed the stores for the army and reconnoitered the British squadron at Malden.

Chauncey had promised to send fifty marines, but had recalled them when on their way to Lake Erie. Harrison, who saw the want unsupplied and observed how much the little squadron had been weakened by sickness, now sent on board from his army near one hundred men, all of whom were volunteers. Some of these, having served as boatmen on the Ohio, were put on duty as seamen; the rest, chiefly men of Kentucky who had never before seen a ship, acted as marines.

Just then Perry was taken down by a violent attack of lake fever; but it was no time to yield to physical weakness; he gave up

to the care of himself only the few days necessary to make the crews acquainted with each other and to teach the new men the use of the guns.

On the 1st of September he was able to be on deck, and again sailed toward Malden. Here he found that the British had equipped their new ship, which they had proudly named *Detroit*, as a memorial of their conquest; but though Perry defied them, the British as yet showed no disposition to meet him; and he returned to Put-in-Bay.

But meantime the British Army, which had been accustomed to the abundance and security which the dominion of the water had afforded, began to suffer from the want of provisions: and to restore the uninterrupted communication with Long Point, General Proctor insisted on the necessity of risking a naval engagement of which the issue

was not thought uncertain. Of this Perry was seasonably informed.

On the 6th, he again reconnoitered Malden, and finding the enemy still at his moorings, he returned once more to his anchorage, to make his final arrangements for the conflict, which was inevitably near at hand. On the evening of the 9th, he summoned, by signal, the commanders of the several vessels, and gave them their instructions in writing. It was his policy to fight the enemy at close quarters; to each vessel its antagonist on the British side was marked out; to the *Lawrence*, the *Detroit;* to the *Niagara* the *Queen Charlotte;* and the written order said: "Engage each your designated adversary in close action, at half cable-length." He also showed them a flag of blue bunting, on which were painted in white letters, the last words of Lawrence: "Don't give up the ship." It was a bright autumn night; the moon was at

the full; as they parted, each to return to the vessel, the last injunction of their young commander was given in the words of Nelson: "If you lay your enemy close alongside, you cannot be out of your place."

At sunrise on the 10th, the British squadron was discovered, from the mast head of the *Lawrence*, gallantly bearing down for action. To Perry, all languishing as he was from the wasting attack of a severe bilious fever, the news was as welcome as the bidding to the most important duty of his life. His anchors were soon lifted, and his squadron began beating out of the bay against a gentle breeze from the southwest. Three or four hours passed away in this contest with an adverse wind, when he resolved to wear ship and run to leeward of the island. "You will engage the enemy from to leeward," said the sailing-master Taylor. "To windward or to leeward," answered Perry, "they shall fight to-

day." But nature on that day came into an alliance with his hopeful courage, and the wind shifted to the southeast. A slight shower had fallen in the morning; the sky became clear; the day on which Perry, forming his line, slowly bore up toward the enemy, then nearly three leagues off, was one of the loveliest of the beautiful days of autumn.

At first, the *Niagara* had led the van. When within about a league of the British, Perry saw that Barclay, with whose vessel he was about to engage, occupied the head of the British line, and he promptly altered the disposition of his vessels to conform to it. Elliott had no cause to be piqued at the change, which was required by the plan that had been uniformly proposed. It was in itself most fit, and was made promptly and without confusion.

The British squadron had hove to, in close

order, the ships' heads to the southward and westward, and waiting to be attacked; the sides of the vessels, newly painted, glittering in the sun, and their gay colors flying in the breeze. The *Detroit*, a new brig of nineteen or twenty guns, commanded by Barclay, an experienced officer, who had fought with Nelson at Trafalgar, was in the van, supported by the *Chippewa*, a gun-boat with one long eighteen on a pivot. Next rode the *Hunter*, of ten guns; the *Queen Charlotte*, of seventeen guns, commanded by Finnis, a gallant and tried officer, who had commanded the squadron till Barclay's arrival, was the fourth, and was flanked by the *Lady Prevost*, which carried thirteen guns, and the *Little Belt*, which had three. On the American side, Perry in the *Lawrence*, of twenty guns, flanked on his left by the *Scorpion*, under Champlin, with one long and one short gun, and the *Ariel*, under Lieutenant Almy, with four

short twelves, and sustained on his right by Turner, in the *Caledonia*, with three long twenty-fours, were to support each other and to cope with the *Chippewa*, the *Detroit* and the *Hunter;* while Elliott, in the *Niagara*, a noble vessel of twenty guns, which was to encounter the *Queen Charlotte*, came next; and with Almy in the *Somers*, of two long thirty-twos, the *Porcupine*, with one long thirty-two, the *Tigress* with one long twenty-four, and the *Trippe*, with one long thirty-two, was to engage *Lady Prevost* and the *Little Belt.* The American gun-boat *Ohio* was absent on special service.

In ships the British had the superiority, their vessels being stronger and their forces being more concentrated; the American gun-boats, at the right of the American line, separated from each other by at least a half cable-length, were not near enough for good service. In number of guns the British had

sixty-three, the Americans fifty-four. In action at a distance, the British, who had thirty-five long guns to fifteen, had greatly the advantage; in close action the weight of metal would favor the Americans. The British commander had one hundred and fifty men from the royal navy, eighty Canadian sailors and two hundred and forty soldiers, mostly regulars, and some Indians, making, with their officers, a little more than five hundred men, of whom, at least, four hundred and fifty were efficient. The American crews— of whom about one-fourth were from Rhode Island, one-fourth regular seamen American or cosmopolitan, about one-fourth raw volunteers from Pennsylvania, Ohio, and chiefly Kentucky, and about one-fourth blacks—numbered on the muster-roll four hundred and ninety, but of these one hundred and sixteen were sick, nearly all of whom were too weak to come on deck, so that the

efficient force of the squadron was a little less than four hundred.

While the Americans, having the weather-gauge, bore up for action, Perry unfolded to the crew of the *Lawrence*, the motto-flag. It was received with hearty cheers, and run up to the fore-royal, in sight of all the squadron. The decks were wet and strewed with sand, to insure a firm foothold when blood should begin to flow, and refreshments were hastily served. For an hour, the stillness of expectation continued unbroken, till a bugle was heard to sound on board the *Detroit*, followed by loud and concerted cheers from all the British line, and Barclay began the conflict, in which the defeat of the Americans would yield to the British the superiority in arms on the land, bare the shores of Ohio to ruthless havoc and ravage, leave Detroit and the far West in the power of the English king, let loose the savage with his tomahawk

PERRY UNFOLDING TO THE CREW OF THE "LAWRENCE" THE MOTTO-FLAG.—*See Page* 154.

on every family of emigrants along the border, and dishonor the star-spangled banner on the continent and on the lakes.

CHAPTER II.

THE FATE OF THE FLAG-SHIP LAWRENCE.

At fifteen minutes before twelve, Barclay began the action by firing a single twenty-four pound shot at the *Lawrence*, which had then approached within a mile and a half, or less, of the British line. The shot did not take effect; but it was clear that he desired to conduct the fight with the American squadron at a distance, which his very great superiority in long guns marked out as his wisest plan. It was, on the other hand, the object of Perry to bring his squadron as near to his antagonist as possible, for he had the advantage in weight of metal. In five

minutes more the shot from the *Detroit* struck the *Lawrence*, and passed through its bulwarks.

At that moment, the advantage lay altogether with the British, whose line headed nearly south-southwest; the Americans, as they advanced, headed about southwest, with the wind abeam; so that the two lines formed an acute angle of about fifteen degrees; the *Lawrence* as yet scarcely reached beyond the third vessel in the British line, so that she was almost as much in the rear of the *Detroit* as in advance of the *Queen Charlotte*. The *Caledonia* was in its designated place in the American line, at a half-cable's length from the *Lawrence;* and from the angle which the line formed, a little less near the enemy. The *Niagara*, which followed the *Caledonia*, was abaft the beam of the *Charlotte*, and opposite the *Lady Prevost*, but at a slightly greater distance

from the British than the ships which preceded her. As for the gun-boats, they would have spread beyond the British lines by more than a quarter of a mile, had they been in their places, each distant from the other a half-cable's length; but they were dull sailors, and the sternmost was more than two miles distant from the enemy, and more than a mile behind the *Lawrence.*

At five minutes before twelve, the *Lawrence,* which was already suffering, began to return to the British attack from her long twelve-pounder; the two schooners on her weather-bow, the *Scorpion* under Champlin, the *Ariel* under Lieutenant Packet, were ordered by trumpet to open their fire; and the action became general along the two lines. The two schooners bravely kept their places all the day, and gallantly and steadily rendered every aid which their few guns and weight of armament allowed. The

Caledonia was able to engage at once and effectively, for she carried two long twenty-fours; but the carronades of the *Niagara* fell short of their mark. Elliott therefore at first used only one long twelve-pounder, which was on the side towards the enemy; but he soon moved another where it could be serviceable; so that while his ship carried twenty guns he discharged but two, which, however, were plied so vigorously, that, in the course of two hours or more, nearly all the shot of that caliber was expended. The sternmost gunboats could as yet take no part in the fight.

It was under these circumstances that Perry formed the desperate but necessary resolution of taking the utmost advantage of the superior speed of the *Lawrence*, and leaving the *Caledonia*, he advanced upon the enemy; so that however great might have been the zeal of every officer in the other

ships of his squadron, he must necessarily have remained for a short time exposed alone. The breeze was light; his motion was slow; and as he fanned down with the flagging wind, the *Detroit* with her long guns planted her shot in the *Lawrence* deliberately and at discretion. The *Scorpion* and *Ariel*, all exposed as they were for the want of bulwarks, accompanied the flag-ship, but suffered little, for they were neglected by the enemy, who concentrated his fire on the *Lawrence*.

At noon, Perry luffed up and tried the effect of the first division of his battery on the starboard side; but it did not much injure his antagonist; he therefore bore away again, and approached nearer and still nearer, and after firing a broadside at a quarter-past twelve, once more continued his onward course, till he arrived "within canister shot distance," or within five hundred

yards, or a little less, when he took a position exactly parallel to the *Detroit*, and, notwithstanding what he had suffered from loss of men and injury to his rigging, he poured in upon her a swift, continuous and effective fire. Here the good effect of his discipline was apparent; his men showed how well they had been trained to the guns, which were rapidly and skillfully served. In the beginning of the conflict, the *Niagara* came in for a share of the attention of the enemy; whose shot very early took effect upon her and carried away one of her fore-top-mast backstays. But at half-past twelve, Finnis, who commanded the *Queen Charlotte*, perceived that the *Niagara*, which was apparently destined for his antagonist, "kept so far to windward as to render his twenty-four-pounder carronades useless," "made sail for the purpose of assisting the *Detroit*;" so that Perry, in the *Lawrence*, aided only by the

schooners on his weather bow, and the distant shot of the *Caledonia*, had to contend in close action with more than twice his force.

The carnage was terrible, yet the commodore, as his men loved to call their young commander, was on that day nerved by a superior spirit; wrought up to the highest state of mental activity, he was superior to every infirmity of mind or body, of passion or will; he knew not that he was still languishing under the effects of a violent fever; he was unmoved in the presence of danger; and amidst the scenes of agony and death, he maintained a perfect cheerfulness of manner and serenity of judgment. His young brother, a boy of thirteen, was struck down at his side, but he was spared the trial of seeing him die; the blow came only from fragments which had been dashed in pieces by a ball; and he soon recovered. Yarnall, his first lieutenant, came to him with the

report that all the officers in his division were cut down; and he asked for others. They were assigned him; but he soon returned with a renewal of the same tale and the same request. "I have no more officers to furnish you," said Perry; "you must endeavor to make out for yourself." And Yarnall was true to the admonition; though at least thrice wounded, he kept on deck, ever directing his battery in person. Forest, the second lieutenant, was struck down at Perry's side by a grape shot; but the ball had spent its force; he was only stunned, and soon recovered. The dying, with whom the desk was strewed, rested their last looks upon the countenance of their beloved commander; and when men at the guns were swept away, the survivors turned silently round to catch his eye, as they stepped into the places of their companions who had fallen. Brooks, of Massachusetts—son of a

soldier of the Revolution, who is still remembered as an upright and popular governor of the State—an excellent officer of marines, a man of rare endowments and of singular personal beauty, was fearfully mangled by a cannon-ball in the hip. Carried down to the surgeon's apartment, he asked no aid, for he knew his doom, and that he had life in him for only one or two half-hours; but as he gave himself over to death, he often inquired how the day was going; and when the crowd of new-comers from the deck showed how deadly was the contest, he ever repeated his hope for the safety of the commander.

In the midst of this terrible slaughter, concentrated in a single brig, both officers and crew looked along their line for help, and asked one another, Where is the *Niagara?* She was to have engaged the *Queen Charlotte;* why is she not at hand? Elliott knew full

well that it had been Perry's "intention to bring the enemy to close action immediately," and, before the fighting began, had "mentioned it to his crew," in language suited to inspire them with confidence. He knew full well that he was specially directed to attack the *Queen Charlotte*, and from the superiority of his armament, he had boasted that if he could come alongside of her, he could take her in ten minutes. The wind, it is true, was light; but no want of a wind compelled him to leave the *Lawrence* to bear "a great proportion" or the whole "of the fire of the *Queen Charlotte* and of the *Hunter*, as well as of the *Detroit*;" his ship was a fleet one; to restrain her from passing the *Caledonia*, "he was obliged frequently to keep the main yard braced sharp aback." Elliott was a young man, born the self-same year with Perry, his peer in rank as master-commandant, except that Perry, from having entered the navy in

boyhood, was some years his senior in the service. How could he suffer the enemy, undisturbed, to fall in numbers on one whom he should have loved as a brother, whose danger he should have shared, in the brightness of whose glory he should have found new luster added to his own name? Some attributed his delay to fear; but though he had so far one attribute of a timid man, that he was a noisy boaster, his conduct during the day, in the judgment of disinterested observers and critics, acquits him of having been spell-bound by downright cowardice. Some charged him with disaffection to his country, from sympathy with family connections in Canada; but this is an imputation justified by no concurrent circumstances, or acts of his earlier or later life. Some thought him blinded by envy, which sews up the eyes with an iron thread, and leaves the mind to hover on an undiscerning wing. He may,

perhaps, have been disturbed by that unhappy passion, for a year before he had himself conspicuously won applause near Buffalo, and had then promised himself the command on Lake Erie, to be followed by a victory achieved under his own flag; that very morning, too, his first position had been, as we have seen, in the van, but it had been very properly changed for the very purpose of placing him opposite to the *Queen Charlotte*. Elliott had inherent defects of character. He wanted the generous impulse which delights in the fame of others; the delicacy of sentiment which rejects from afar everything coarse or mean; the alertness of courage which finds in danger an allurement; the quick perception that sees the time to strike; the self-possessed will, which is sure to hit the nail on the head. According to his own account, he at first determined to run through the line in pursuit of the *Queen Charlotte;*

and having a fair and sufficient breeze, he directed the weather braces to be manned for that purpose; but he changed his purpose when he observed that the *Lawrence* was crippled and that her fire was slackening; and after a consultation with the purser, Magrath, who was an experienced seaman, he agreed: "If the British affect the weather gauge, we are gone." So he kept his place next in the line to the *Caledonia*, which lingered behind, because she was a dull sailor, and, in the light wind, was, moreover, retarded in her movements by the zeal of Turner, her commander, to render service by his armament, which enabled him to keep up an effective fire from the distance.

It was a part of Elliott's orders to close with the *Queen Charlotte*, but he held it to be his paramount duty to keep his place, a half-cable's length behind the *Caledonia* on the line as designated in the original order of battle,

even though the flagship of the squadron might be cut to pieces.

So Perry lay exposed to thrice his force, at the distance of fifteen hundred or a thousand feet, aided only by two schooners on his beam and the constant help of the *Caledonia.*

Under the heavy fire, the men on deck became fewer and fewer; but Perry continued the action with unabated serenity. Parsons, the surgeon's mate, and the only man in the fleet who was then able to render surgical aid, heard a call for him at a small skylight that let in the day upon his apartment; and as he stepped up he recognized the voice of his commander, who said, with a placid countenance and quiet tone:

"Doctor, send me one of your men;" meaning one of the six allowed for assistance to the wounded. The call was obeyed; in a few minutes more it was successively renewed and obeyed, till at the seventh call

Parsons could only answer that there were no more. "Are there any that can pull a rope?" asked Perry; and two or three of the wounded crawled on deck, to lend a feeble hand in pulling at the last guns. Wilson Mays, who was so sick as to be unfit for the deck, begged to be of use. "But what can you do?" was the question. And he replied: "I can sound the pump, and let a strong man go to the guns." He accordingly sat down by the pump, and at the end of the fight was found at his post, "with a ball through his heart." The surgeon's apartment could offer no security to the wounded. In the shallow vessel it was necessarily on a level with the water, and was repeatedly perforated by cannon-balls. Once as the surgeon stooped to dress a wound, a ball passed directly over his head, and must have destroyed him, had he not been bending down. A wounded midshipman, just as he left the surgeon's

hands, was dashed against the ship's side by a cannon-ball. On deck, the bulwarks were broken in, and round balls passed through with little obstruction; but as long as he could, Perry kept up a regular and effective fire, so that the *Detroit*, of whose crew many were killed or wounded, was almost dismantled. On board the *Queen Charlotte*, the loss was most important, for Finnis, her commander, "a noble and intrepid officer," fell at his post, and Lieutenant Stokes, the next officer in rank, was struck senseless by a splinter. On board the *Lawrence* the shrieks of the wounded and the crash of timbers shattered by cannon-balls were still heard; but its own fire grew fainter and fainter; one gun after another was dismounted. Death had the mastery; the carnage was unparalleled in naval warfare; more than four-fifths of the effective officers and men on board were killed or disabled by wounds; the deck,

in spite of the layer of sand, was slippery with blood, which ran down the sides of the ship; the wounded and the dead lay thickly strewed everywhere around. To fire the last gun, Perry himself assisted. At last every gun in the ship's battery on the enemy's side was dismounted; every brace and bowline was shot away; the vessel became unmanageable, in spite of the zeal of the commander and the great exertions of the sailing-master. And still Perry did not despair, but had an eye which could look through the cloud.

Meantime Elliott watched the last spasms of the *Lawrence* as it lay gasping in its ruins; and now that its fire was dying away, that no fresh signal was hoisted, that no special message was sent from Perry, he persuaded himself that his young superior lay among the slain.

PERRY FIRING THE LAST GUN.—*See Page* 172.

THE VICTORY.

Believing himself now the chiet commander of the squadron, Elliott hailed the *Caledonia* and ordered Lieutenant Turner to bear up and make way for him. Turner at once, without a word, put up his helm in the most daring manner and made sail for the enemy's line, using his small armament all the while to the best advantage; while Elliott, under a freshening breeze, passed to the windward of the *Caledonia.* The *Lawrence* lay disabled and silent; by all the rules of naval warfare he should have given her protection by sailing between her and the British; but instead of it, he kept to the windward, sheltered by the helpless flag-ship, to which he sent Magrath in his boat with a few brace men for twelve-pound round shot, to replenish his own nearly exhausted stock; and then firing, as he went along, on the *Charlotte*, he steered for the

head of the British line. Perry, who saw with the swiftness of intuition the new method that must be chosen now that the first had failed, and who had already resolved to transfer his flag, with the certainty that, in the crippled state of the British, "victory must perch on his banner," immediately entered his boat with his commander's pennant and his little brother, and bade the four sailors whom he took as oarsmen to row with all speed for the *Niagara*. The command of the *Lawrence* fell to Yarnall, with full discretionary power to surrender or hold out; but he had an admonition from above in the motto-flag which the departing hero left flying at the mast-head, and which spoke with trumpet words: "DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP." The flag had been raised amidst the shouts of the whole squadron and the promise of the crew of the *Lawrence* to redeem the pledge. Yarnall consulted with Forest and with Taylor;

PERRY GOING IN AN OPEN BOAT TO BOARD THE "NIAGARA."—*See Page* 174.

there were no more guns that could be used; and had there been, men were wanting to handle them. Fourteen persons alone were left well and unhurt, and of these, only nine were seamen. Further resistance was impossible; to hold out might only expose life recklessly. Officers and men watched anxiously the progress of Perry; they saw the sailors force him to sit down; they saw a broadside aimed at him, and fall harmlessly around him; they saw marines from three vessels shower at him musket-balls, which only ruffled the water of the lake; and at fifteen minutes before three, they saw the oars dipping for the last time, and their beloved commander climb the side of the *Niagara*. They had braved the enemy's fire for three hours; could they not confide in help from their commodore and hold out five minutes more? True, they had no means of offence; but the battle-flag with its

ringing words floated over their heads; they had a pledge to keep; they had an enemy whose dying courage they should refuse to re-animate; they had their country's flag to preserve unblemished; they had the honor of that day's martyrs to guard; they had a chief to whom they should have spared an unspeakable pain; they had the wounded to consider, who, with one voice cried out: "Rather sink the ship than surrender! Let us all sink together!" And yet a shout of triumph from the enemy proclaimed to both squadrons that the flag of the *Lawrence* had been lowered; nor did they then forbode how soon it was to be raised again.

Meantime, Perry climbed the gangway of the *Niagara*, and the superior officer, whom Elliott had thought to be dead, stood before him, radiant with the indomitable purpose of winning the day; with his fortitude unimpaired by the crowded horrors of his last

two hours; black with the smoke of the battle, but unscathed, with not so much as a wound of his skin; with not a hair of his head harmed. His quick eye glanced at the ship's rigging, at her hale crew that thronged the deck, and his buoyant nature promised him a harvest of glory as he beheld the *Niagara*, "very little injured," even "perfectly fresh," its crew in the best condition, with scarcely more than three men hurt. Elliott's mind was stunned, and completely dumfounded, he asked the foolish question: "What is the result on board your brig?" though he had seen that the brig was a disabled wreck, and had even thought that Perry had fallen. "Cut all to pieces!" said Perry, whose mind had instantly condemned the course in which Elliott was steering, and was forming his plan for redeeming the day. "I have been sacrificed," he added; but he checked all reproach of Elliott and blamed

only the gun-boats, which had been still further astern. It marks how ill Elliott was at his ease, how much he was struck with shame, how entirely he lost his self-possession, that he caught at the word which seemed to relieve him from censure, and at once offered to go and bring up the gun-boats. "Do so," said Perry, for Elliott had anticipated his wish, and proposed what was best for both. At this, Elliott, the second officer of the squardron, whose right it would be to take the chief command if Perry should be wounded, left his own brig, and went in the boat on the paltry errand fit only for a subordinate, to bear a superfluous message to the gun-boats, which, under their gallant officers, were advancing as fast as possible.

As he stepped into the boat, Perry, running up his pennant and hoisting the signal for close action, which was instantly answered from all the squardron with loud

cheers, hove to, veered ship, altering her course eight points, set foresail and topsails and top-gallant sail, and bore down to cut the British line, which lay at the distance of a half-mile.

The *Lady Prevost*, disabled by the loss of her rudder, had drifted to the westward and leeward from her place in the line. Barclay, in the *Detroit*, when he saw the prospect of a contest with a second brig, had attempted to veer round, that he might bring his broadside to bear; but in doing it he had fallen upon the *Queen Charlotte*. At this moment, Perry, whom seven, eight or ten minutes in the freshened breeze had brought up with the British, disregarding their fire, cut their line, placing the *Chippewa* and the *Lady Prevost* on his left, the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* on his right; and as he did so, he shortened sail to make sure of his aim, and coolly and with fatal accuracy, at half

pistol shot, he raked the *Lady Prevost* with his broadside port, while he poured his full starboard broadside on the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*, as they lay entangled and for the moment helplessly exposed. The loud, many-voiced shriek that rose from the *Detroit* told that the tide of battle had turned; but what was worse for the British was that their gallant commander, the skillful and intrepid but ill-fated Barclay, who had lost an arm at Trafalgar, received a desperate wound which was to deprive him of the other. The wound was so severe that he was obliged to be carried below, leaving the direction to an officer of little experience.

Perry now ordered the marines to clear the decks of the *Lady Prevost;* but the survivors, terrified by the raking fire which they had suffered, fled below, leaving on deck no one but their commander, who, having for

the moment lost his senses from a severe wound in the head, remained at his post, gazing about with a vacant stare. Perry, merciful even in battle, stopped his guns on that side, but having luffed athwart the bows of the two ships, which had now got clear of one another, he continued to pour into them a close, deadly fire. Meantime, Elliott, heedless of exposure to danger, had passed in an open boat down the line, and repeated to the schooners the orders which Perry had sufficiently announced by signal. Their commanders themselves, with sails up and the use of large oars, hastened into close fight. The *Trippe*, under Holdup Stevens, was following hard upon the *Caledonia;* so that Elliott got on board the *Somers*, a schooner of two guns, where he showed his rankling discontent and unsettled frame of mind by sending the commanding officer below, and beating with his trumpet a gunner who

disregarded an absurd order, and did just what was evidently most proper to be done.

The small vessels having by this time "got within grape and canister distance," threw in close discharges from their side. The commanding officer of the *Queen Charlotte* finding himself exposed to be raked ahead and astern, was the first to give up; one of her officers appeared on the taffrail of that ship and waved a white handkerchief, bent to a boarding-pike, in token that she had struck. The *Detroit* had become completely unmanageable; every brace was cut away, the mizzen-topmast and gaff were down, the other masts badly wounded, not a stay left forward, the hull very much shattered, and a number of her guns disabled; at three, or a few minutes after, Lieutenant Inglis was, therefore, under the necessity of hailing the Americans, to say he surrendered. The *Hunter* yielded at the same time, as did the

Lady Prevost, which lay to leeward under the guns of the *Niagara*. The *Chippewa*, on the right of the British line, and the *Little Belt* on the extreme left, endeavored to escape, but the first was stopped by Champlin, in the *Scorpion;* the other by Holdup Stevens, in the *Trippe*.

As the cannon ceased, an awful stillness set in; nothing was heard but the feeble groans of the wounded, or the dash of oars as boats glided from one vessel to another.

Possession having been taken of the conquered fleet, at four o'clock Perry sent an express to Harrison with these words:

"DEAR GENERAL:—We have met the enemy, and they are ours; two ships, two brigs, one schooner and one sloop."

As he wrote to the Secretary of the Navy, a religious awe seemed to come over him at his wonderful preservation in the midst of great and long-continued danger; and he

attributed his signal victory to the pleasure of the Almighty.

It was on board the *Lawrence* that Perry then received the submission of the captives. This was due to the sufferings of her crew, to the self-sacrificing courage of the unnamed martyrs who still lay unburied on her deck; to the crowd of wounded, who thought their trials well rewarded by the issue. The witnesses to the act of the British officers in tendering their swords were chiefly the dead and the wounded, and the scene of sorrow tempered and subdued the exultation of triumph.

The conqueror bade his captives retain their side-arms, and added every just and unaffected expression of courtesy, mercy and solicitude for their wounded.

When twilight fell, the mariners who had fallen on board the *Lawrence* and had lain in heaps on the side of the ship opposite to the

British, were sewed up in their hammocks, and, with a cannon-ball at their feet, were dropped one by one into the lake.

At last, but not till his day's work was done, exhausted nature claimed rest, and Perry, turning into his cot, slept as sweetly and quietly as a child.

The dawn of morning revealed the deadly fierceness of the combat. Spectators from the island found the sides of the *Lawrence* completely riddled by shot from the long guns of the British; her deck was thickly covered with clots of blood; fragments of those who had been struck—hair, brains, broken pieces of bones were still sticking to the rigging and sides. The sides of the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* were shattered from bow to stern; on their larboard side there was hardly a hand's-breadth free from the dent of a shot. Balls, canister and grape were found lodged in their bulwarks; their

masts were so much injured that they rolled out in the first high wind.

The loss of the British, as reported by Barclay, amounted to forty-one killed, of whom three were officers, and ninety-four wounded, of whom nine were officers. Of the Americans, twenty-seven were killed and ninety-six wounded. Of these, twenty-one were killed and sixty-one wounded in the *Lawrence*, and about twenty more were wounded in the *Niagara* after she received Perry on board.

An opening on the margin of Putin Bay was selected for the burial-place of the officers who had fallen. The day was serene, the breezes hushed, the water unruffled by a wavelet. The men of both fleets mourned together; as the boats moved slowly in procession, the music played dirges to which the oars kept time; the flags showed the signs of sorrow; solemn minute-guns were heard from the ships. The spot where the

funeral train went on shore was a wild solitude; the Americans and British walked in alternate couples to the graves, like men who, in the presence of eternity, renewed the relation of brothers and members of one human family, and the bodies of the dead were likewise borne along and buried alternately, English and American side by side, and undistinguished.

The wounded of both fleets, meeting with equal assiduous care, were sent to Erie, where Barclay was seen, with tottering steps, supported between Harrison and Perry, as he walked from the landing-place to his quarters.

Perry crowned his victory by his modesty, forbearing to place his own services in their full light, and more than just to others. When, in the following year, he was rewarded by promotion to the rank of captain, he who had never murmured at promotion

made over his own head, hesitated about accepting a preferment which might wound his seniors.

The personal conduct of Perry throughout the 10th of September was perfect. His keenly sensitive nature never interfered with his sweetness of manner, his fortitude, the soundness of his judgment, the promptitude of his decision. In a state of impassioned activity, his plans were wisely framed, were instantly modified as circumstances changed, and were executed with entire coolness and self-possession. The mastery of the lakes, the recovery of Detroit and the far West, the capture of the British army in the peninsula of Upper Canada, were the immediate fruits of his success. The imagination of the American people was taken captive by the singular incidents of a battle in which everything seemed to have flowed from the personal prowess of one man; and wherever he

came the multitude went out to bid him welcome. Washington Irving, the chosen organ as it were of his country, predicted his ever-increasing fame. Rhode Island cherishes his glory as her own; Erie keeps the tradition that its harbor was his ship-yard, its forests the storehouse for the frames of his chief vessels, its houses the hospitable shelter of the wounded among his crews; Cleveland graces her public square with a statue of the hero, wrought of purest marble, and looking out upon the scene of his glory; the tale follows the emigrant all the way up the Straits, and to the head of Lake Superior. Perry's career was short and troubled; he lives in the memory of his countrymen, clothed in perpetual youth, just as he stood when he first saw that his efforts were crowned with success, and could say in his heart: "WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY, AND THEY ARE OURS."

A Day with Lord Byron.

AFTER a ramble of three or four days among the Appenines, to climb the peak which commands a view of the Tuscan Sea as well as of the Adriatic, and to follow the footsteps of Milton among the shades of Vallambrosa, and after lingering through nearly three weeks of spring in Florence and its environs, I took leave of the delightful city, and descending

the valley of the Arno, went through Pisa to Leghorn. The time on which I had fallen was opportune; the Mediterranean squadron of the United States lay at anchor in the harbor, and Lord Byron, having expressed a wish to see an American frigate, had been invited by Commodore Jones to inspect the *Constitution.* On the morning of the 21st of May, 1822, the few Americans who happened to be in Leghorn went on board the ship at the desire of its officers. About noon, Lord Byron, followed by his secretary, mounted its gangway. As he stepped upon the deck he appeared to be agitated, and it was remarked that at first his walk was unsteady; in part from his lameness, in part, perhaps, from an apprehension that curious gazers of some other country than America had intruded, for the sake of seeing him; but finding all present to be Americans, his manner became easy, frank and cheerful. Each one

of the officers and the guests was introduced to him. His high forehead, dark hair and gray eyes; his features, which transmitted his thoughts and feelings as they rose, set off his fame as a poet; and every one who came near him held that day a happy one. One lady, of great personal beauty, put out her hand, and saying, "When I return to Philadelphia, my friends will ask for some token that I have spoken with Lord Byron," she gently took a rose which he wore in the button-hole of his black frock-coat. He was pleased with her unaffected boldness, and the next day sent her a charming note and a copy of "Outlines to Faust" as a more durable memento.

On that day, I had little opportunity to converse with him; but I received an invitation to visit him at Monte Nero. He gave the morning to the officers and to a thorough examination of the ship, of which he well

knew the history. It was a question whether he should receive the honor of a salute; but as he filled no public station, and represented not his country or its sovereign, but only all the Muses, the stern commodore paid no heed to the wishes of Byron's younger admirers.

From the *Constitution*, Captain Chauncey took Byron to the *Ontario*, and there the junior officers could more freely indulge their enthusiasm. As he passed through their quarters, his eye lighted upon a New York edition of his poems. He took it up with every appearance of pleasure, and seemed to interpret it as an earnest of his fame. As he left the vessel, a salute was fired, the yards were manned, and three cheers were given with glorious heartiness and union.

The next morning, I drove out from Leghorn to Monte Nero, and at about eleven, sent a short note to Lord Byron, to inquire

when I might wait on him. His answer came immediately, and it was:

"I shall be very happy in your visit. Could you make it convenient about an *hour* hence, for I have been lazy to-day and am not yet dressed, and, I am ashamed to say, hardly awake."

So I amused myself for an hour in looking at the sea, which lay before me at about three miles' distance, and in plucking myrtle, with which the side of the mountain was overgrown. Punctually at the end of the hour, I made my way to Byron's villa. The house was of brick, painted a flaming red, and stood in the midst of cultivated grounds, which had no unusual attraction. The country in the rear was not picturesque; the whole aspect was prosaic and sultry. It must have been an undesirable summer residence, except that on the west it was near the Mediterranean.

I was shown at once into a spacious, cool

room, and in a moment Lord Byron joined me, offering me his hand. He began by asking many questions about the squadron, and generally about our ships of war and our battles at sea. He appeared to be singularly well informed of the duels which had taken place among distinguished American naval officers, knowing the names of the combatants, and something of the causes of their quarrels. He understood, in some measure, the political divisions in the United States, and gave his sympathy to the Democratic party. Of American men of letters he enumerated two or three with respect; among them Mr. Edward Everett; but he spoke most of Washington Irving. He had been delighted with "Knickerbocker's History of New York," which he seemed to prefer of all Irving's works; and though he thought Irving's style became afterward "rather florid," he commended it very highly. On

my expressing pleasure at hearing from him the praise of our American favorite, Byron replied that his esteem for Irving was common to all his countrymen.

He spoke a great deal of a tour which he was bent on making through America; he believed that he should judge its people with impartiality; thus far, he said, none had gone among them but speculators; he should go unprejudiced, and would certainly keep himself unbiased by prepossessions in favor of his native country.

Referring to his last journey from England to Switzerland, he described his tour on the Rhine as having given him unmingled pleasure; he liked the people as well as the scenery; and regretted only his ignorance of the German language, and that he had not seen more of Germany and its inhabitants. I told him how often his poems had been translated into German, and how widely

they were read; that the court preacher at Berlin had made a version of his Hebrew melodies; that a canto of "Childe Harold" had been selected at Leipzig for the subject of a prize translation.

He asked me if I knew Goethe. It had been my good fortune to have repeatedly seen the great epicurean poet, philosopher and critic, who was as unlike Byron as possible; bearing all things complacently except interruption when writing; serene even in his loves, having a heart as clear as crystal and as cold; the friend and minister of a prince, yet meditative rather than active; dwelling apart, and, as it were, in high regions, removed beyond the cares of time; no ruler of the souls of people, but a god among his countrymen; his mind an unruffled surface that mirrored his age, and clothed its skepticism in verse; gifted with a refined sensibility, that defied the rules of inductive

science, he yet looked nature in the eye, discerned analogies from afar, divined the answer to her sacred riddle, and heard the chorus of the flowers reveal the secret of the law which they obeyed in their change of form; no martyr, and with nothing of the spirit of martyrdom; never deeply touched by the sufferings of nations in his time; contemplating with equal indifference the stormy revolutions among the objects of his passion, and the overturns of empire in America and in Europe. Twice I was with him at Weimar, and once on a bright autumn morning Goethe had received me in a garden attached to the apartments which he occupied in Jena. Dressed in a frock-coat, without a waistcoat, and with not the cleanest of linen, he came with the stately step and majesty of mien that poets attribute to the Olympian Jupiter. As I walked for an hour or more by his side, he spoke of many things, but par-

ticularly of Byron, saying that he devoured greedily everything which Byron wrote; that he admired "Manfred," and all the more willingly because it appeared to him to have been imitated from his own "Faust;" that "Don Juan," of which two cantos only had then appeared, was the most full of life and genius; that its manner was in keeping with the subject; and speaking of English as though he knew it well enough to pass judgment on style and diction, he pretended to find the model of the polysyllabic rhymes in the satires and pleasantries of Swift.

To this Byron replied that the popularity of his works in Germany was new to him, and would console him for the abuse he was constantly receiving in England; that he had dedicated one of his late works to Goethe, though his publisher, for some reason, had omitted the dedication without asking his leave to do so; that he should take more

effectual care that a poem which he was about to print should be inscribed to Goethe. As to "Manfred," he declared that he deemed it honor enough to have "Manfred" mentioned with "Faust," but that, at the time of writing it, he had never read "Faust," and knew nothing about it, except that, a short time before he had conceived the idea of his own drama, Monk Lewis had translated to him some of the scenes of that of Goethe, and had given him an idea of its plan.

Shelley, he added, was translating "Faust," and this led him to a defense of Shelley.

"You may have heard," said he, "many foolish stories of his being a man of no principle, an atheist, and all that; but he is not." And he explained what appeared in Shelley as atheism was only a subtle metaphysical idealism.

He went on to defend himself. He owned very frankly that many of his friends in Italy

as well as in England, had entreated him not to go on with "Don Juan." He apologized for its immorality, pleading in extenuation the example of Fielding, and that there were much worse things in Smollett than in anything he himself had written. He asked, too, what the fault-finders would say to the introduction to Goethe's "Faust."

He then spoke of the clamor which had risen against him from all sides in England. He said, with an air of indifference, he had heard that Jeffrey was preparing a new and a severe article against him in the *Edinburg Review;* that a letter of remonstrance had been addressed to his publisher—"not to me," said he, "for me they deem incorrigible." Among other enemies, he observed that the king (George IV.) was determined on persecuting him.

"I never went to court," he said, "and one evening at a ball I was presented to the king

(then prince-regent), at the king's own request, not at mine. I never asked to be presented, and yet the king complains of me, that after he had treated me so civilly I had written eight lines against him. The lines were written before I was presented to him."*

He turned round to hand me one of the pamphlets written in abuse of him, but then corrected himself, saying he had just sent it with others to the binder. His manner affected careless ease and gayety, but it was

* The eight lines referred to are those "to a lady weeping," the Princess Charlotte of Wales, who was said to have burst into tears on hearing that the Whigs could not form a cabinet.

"Weep, daughter of a royal line,
A sire's disgrace, a realm's decay.
Ah! happy if each tear of thine
Could wash a father's fault away!

"Weep—for thy tears are virtue's tears—
Auspicious to these suffering isles:
And be each drop in future years
Repaid thee by thy people's smiles!"

plain to me that he had been deeply wounded; that, with a genuine contempt for the cavils of impertinent mediocrity, he valued the good opinion of his own countrymen beyond the praise of all the world beside, and that he specially deplored the expected censure from Jeffrey. Yet he was too proud to yield to menace; and when he was attacked, it was his nature to defy. He seemed ready to say with one of his own heroes:

> "No; though that cloud were thunder's worst,
> And charged to crush him, let it burst."

He alluded with evident satisfaction to the part he had taken in defending Pope. Of Shakespeare he disclaimed being one of the most enthusiastic admirers, and thought he had by some been overrated. He said that Johnson's preface to Shakespeare contained the most correct judgment of Shakespeare

as a poet; that it expressed his opinion of Shakespeare exactly.

Of Italy Byron spoke with affectionate interest. He deplored the success of the Austrians in putting down the Neapolitan revolution, which happened during his residence at Ravenna. "Had the Neapolitans fought bravely," he said, "we were all ready to rise in the rear of their invaders." He said that the ignominious defeat of the revolutionists alone prevented an outbreak in the Romagna; that he was then compelled to leave Ravenna, because all his friends were, one after another, driven into exile; the priests stuck up an *affiche*, threatening him with he knew not what. But for the future of Italy Byron was full of hope.

"The young men of Italy," he said, "are in a fair way; they long for liberty; let them secure that, and afterward study politics and learn how to govern."

The land from Monte Nero slopes downward toward the Mediterranean. Lord Byron, who had made an excuse for leaving me a moment, asked me to go into another room, which commanded a view of the sea. He took me to the window to point out the pleasant views, and under his direction I caught a glimpse of Napoleon's prison, the island of Elba. On turning to take leave, to my great surprise, I found a lady had entered noiselessly and taken a seat on the sofa. It was the Countess Guiccioli. She appeared to me to be about twenty-five, though her age was really less. Her hair was a light auburn; her complexion very fair; her cheeks delicately rosy; her forehead rather high and of the purest white, while her fine large eyes were dark, expressing calmness and gentleness. Her nose was a perfect model for a sculptor; her mouth was small, and when she spoke, showed faultless rows of

teeth; her smile was singularly pleasing one would have said that innocence and repose were the leading expression of her countenance; she seemed incapable of wishing ill to any one. I had seen and have often seen more splendid beauty, but her manner was that of uncommon gentleness and amiability.

I had the seat nearest her. She was very, very fond of music, and Lord Byron had just imported for her a piano-forte from Vienna. She praised the superior excellence of the instrument; and had much to say or to inquire about the great love of the Germans for music; the social habits of the Berlinese; the manner in which "Lalla Rookh" had been represented as a pageant at the court of Berlin, and many things relating to France and Italy. The conversation was in Italian, which as far as I could judge, Lord Byron spoke perfectly well. In the course of it he had something to say in

praise of the Italian language, which he appeared to think more beautiful than the English; as if unmindful that the English is the best, the simplest, the truest of all, and that he had written in it much that will endure as long as the language is spoken or remembered.

It was late in the day when I left Monte Nero. Lord Byron had been throughout most perfectly courteous and friendly, adding one civil thing to another and detaining me by some new suggestion, when I offered once or twice to take leave. I could not doubt that the scorn which he sometimes professed for English opinion was only an evidence of how greatly he would have valued the esteem of the best in England, and how keenly his exquisitely sensitive nature suffered from their reproaches. In estimating his rank among poets, it must be remembered that he died at thirty-six; at an

age when Milton had not produced his epic; when Dryden's genius had given imperfect evidence of his great powers; when Scott had become known only by his "Lay of the Last Minstrel;" when Schiller had not produced the magnificent dramas that are his crowning glory; when Goethe had not written his "Iphigenie," or "Tasso," or "Faust." And Byron's mind, like Schiller's, needed time to purify its passions and clear itself of imperfections. But the lot of Byron has been hardest of all. His wife, against the first advice of her counsel, insisted on a separation from him, refusing to attempt to cherish in him the better life which might still have risen up; his chosen friend, to whose fidelity he intrusted, with touching earnestness, the defense of his good name, accepted money from his enemies to burn the carefully prepared memoir that he prepared for posterity; he would willingly have made

a sacrifice of himself to give liberty and unity to Italy, but the ill-preparedness of her sons shipwrecked his hopes; to Greece he devoted his fortune and his life, and died before he saw her emancipation secured. Sorrow seemed to claim him as her own, and to give him no compensation but the power of expressing sorrow as no other English poet has done. His best thoughts were wrung from him by emotions of excessive grief. His genius, like the lightning, wrapped its brilliancy in the darkness of the blackest clouds; but, though he called himself a misanthrope, he melted at the sight of distress, was ever ready to help the poor and the suffering with his purse and his sympathy, and spoke and acted and died for the liberties of mankind.

In his poems, he was not so much the representative of his native country, as of the state of the European mind in his time; yet

even in Britain he takes rank as the first English poet of this century, while on the continent that rank is awarded to him without a peer. In America, his popularity has declined less than in England; but it is the renovated nation of the Greeks that fervently cherish his memory, as the unselfish martyr to their independence.

EDWARD EVERETT.

IN the death of EDWARD EVERETT I have lost the oldest friend that remained to me. I saw him for the first time in August, 1813, more than a half century ago, on my examination for admission to Harvard College. I was then twelve years old, he nineteen. He was at the time the college tutor of the Latin language, and for one quarter at Cambridge

our class read with him the first books of Livy. A marvelous account of the ability he had displayed in the four years of his student's life, his undisputed reputation as the best scholar that had been graduated within the traditions of that day, a grave and sedate and earnest manner, a sanctity of appearance that made him in youth an object of veneration, gave him over our class an influence such as no other instructor exercised. In a few weeks he was invited to take the place left vacant by the lamented Buckminster, and at the end of the term he bade us an affectionate farewell. I remember to this day the aspect of holiness which he wore, as he made us a parting speech, full of the best counsels and exhortations. In the pulpit his manner at that time was more sober and calm and solemn than at any later period. Crowds thronged to hear him; he loved occasionally to treat subjects of critical learning; the

oldest doctors in the temple were amazed at his skill in disputation; and the young of both sexes hung with delight on his fervid but chaste and modest eloquence.

In the latter part of 1814 he traveled to the South, having for one of his chief objects to visit Jefferson; but calls from home forced him back from Washington. In December, John Adams, then in his eightieth year, thus heralded his fame to the great author of our declaration of independence: "The most exalted of our geniuses in Boston have an ambition to see Monticello, its library and its sage. I lately gave a line of introduction to Mr. EVERETT, our most celebrated youth." He had been a clergyman for about a year, and was then but twenty.

Soon elected Professor of Greek literature in Harvard, where the promise of his return was hailed with rapturous delight by the students, he repaired to the University of

Gottingen for better preparation for the office. Here among those most accomplished in learning and most famed for industry, he secured the same degree of esteem as at home. He had a miraculous facility in acquiring learning; this is one of the marked features of his intellect, in which I never knew any one that excelled him. He mastered Greek with an ease that was the admiration of his teachers; Dissen, the great enthusiast for Plato and Pindar and the Greek tragedians, a solitary recluse, learned to bear him affection; and before long he spoke and wrote German so well, that at the request of the venerable Eichhorn, the editor, he contributed a review to the great Gottingen periodical.

It was during his residence abroad that my intimate relations with EVERETT began. Just as he was leaving London, when fullest of engagements, and when every moment of

his time was most precious, he heard that I, then seventeen, was on my way through Holland to Gottingen, and he found time to write in advance and send to meet me at Amsterdam a very long letter, full of encouragement and the most minute and carefully considered detail of instructions and advice. An elder brother could not have shown more of guardian care. I mention this, only to bring out another trait in his character. He never missed an opportunity to do a kind office to a fellow man, especially to a man of letters. All his life long he was true to this quality in his nature. He could not be so occupied but he would find time for a good word to any young scholar that needed it, and when a novice in authorship ventured to come before the public, he was sure to ponder upon the best way of introducing him to favor, or shielding him from censure, or, if need were, breaking

his fall. At the same time he was chary of his hours and even of his minutes.

A young man who had a fondness for classical studies, and was hesitating whether to devote himself specially to them as a pursuit for life, EVERETT advised to a different choice, and added: "You see, I have placed so much confidence in you as not to hesitate in advising you to this, because my own studies happen to be devoted to the other. No one thing does or will give me greater pleasure than to witness any sort of improvement in America; and if you should find your taste incline you to those pursuits which fall within my sphere, you may depend upon my counting every success you meet as a new pleasure of my own."

Here another marked characteristic of EVERETT'S mind is portrayed with exact truth. He took pleasure in every success that any man could gain, alike in other pursuits and

in those kindred to his own. He never doled out scant praise. He never withheld from any one the applause that was due. I never could discern in him the slightest vestige of envy. His heart expanded at observing merit in others; and if sometimes he was too forbearing or too complacent toward mediocrity, he gloriously redeemed that foible by the keenest and most willing perception of all kinds of excellence. His own culture of a particular branch only gave him taste to discern and promptness to acknowledge any happy achievement of others in the same class of effort. He would hear a public speaker do well, relish his performance with the liveliest pleasure, and dwell on its merits with nice discrimination and the heartiest approval.

Returning home to occupy his post as Professor of Greek Literature at Harvard, he burst upon the world around him with a

fertility and variety of industry, which even went beyond highly raised expectations. In part this was the natural outflow of his own exuberant and buoyant genius; in part perhaps it proceeded from something like necessity. He inherited no fortune; nothing but the taste for intellectual culture and purity; he was the most successful member of a numerous family; and his affection for those who were bound to him by ties of blood could never be exhausted. His manner of life was marked by liberality and elegance; but he was simple in his habits, and was never given to ostentation; and by the fruits of his own exertion he was able to be of service to those who were akin to him and to others. There were those whom he never ceased to care for, even when the burden became very heavy for him to bear. Here is another leading trait in his character; he gave away money not thoughtlessly but freely, always with reflect-

ing judgment, as befitted one who had not much to spare and who desired to do the most good; he kept up his habit of generosity always; and in proportion to his own income, there was perhaps no one who gave more, or showed himself more free from everything that is sordid. His happiness seemed to centre in others; and where is there a man who habitually did so much work for others and so little for himself alone? His activity gave an impulse to all kinds of study; to the study of ancient law, of art, as well as of classic literature. His manner of speaking was irresistible. Kirkland, the President of Harvard College, who was remarkable for his love of all his good scholars, referring to a cast which adorned EVERETT'S library, said of him, that in the animation of his eloquence he looked like his own Apollo. And in the midst of the toil which his multiplied courses of lectures brought upon him, he became

editor of the *North American Review.* For a time the world mixed with its admiration that disposition to blame, which is perhaps necessary to bring out talent in its perfection. To be first in so many branches, in scholarship, in eloquence, in English style, in general letters, and among conservative people to go off the old track and move upon a broader guage of his own, was more than could be borne without jealousy; but if others were ever unjust towards Mr. EVERETT, he never retaliated, and generously and without diminution, recognized the worth even of those who most grudgingly conceded his own. To these public attractions he added exemplary tenderness in private life; and when any one of his family became ill, he was the most judicious, most patient, and most skilful nurse.

The culminating moment of this period of his life was in August, 1824, when he was to

address the great literary society of Cambridge on the circumstances favorable to the progress of literature in America. A vast audience, culled chiefly from New England, rushed eagerly to hear him; by a happy chance, Lafayette, to whom all the people wished to show gratitude and honor, was present. EVERETT treated the main topic of his address admirably and most acceptably, and then in a manner peculiarly his own, he spoke the welcome to the returning hero in words which went straight to the heart of his throng of hearers, and which Chateaubriand translated to delight France. This hour was perhaps the happiest of his life; his triumph too perfect to be renewed. The oration was printed; one edition after another was swept off with avidity; and all men in Massachusetts were grateful to him, that what they wished should be done faultlessly well, he had done in a manner of con-

summate tenderness and beauty. A vacancy existed in the representation in Congress of the district in which he resided, and he was, by the enthusiasm of the young, and by a general running together of opinion, designated as the candidate and elected.

That same season he drew nearer and nearer to the affections of the New England people by a noble address at Plymouth, on the landing of the Pilgrims. In the following spring the semi-centennial anniversary of the first battles of the revolution was to be celebrated; and no other than he was thought of to be the orator. The village church in which he then spoke was filled chiefly by the farmers of the neighborhood; and such was his fame, and such the good-will borne towards him, that the eyes of many an old man shone with tears, as soon as he rose and before he could enter on his theme.

Intense expectation followed him to Congress, where he took his place in December, 1825. For some weeks he sat as a listener. An extract of a letter from General Hamilton of South Carolina, to whom his speech was a reply, will show how, early in the following February, he began:

"I send you the debate on the resolution calling on the President for information in relation to the Congress of Panama, in which our friend Mr. EVERETT made his debut. It was just as it ought to have been, because it was entirely extemporaneous, and therefore took the House by surprise, the members of which did not entertain any expectation of hearing Mr. E., except on some topic of elaborate preparation. His manner is mild and prepossessing, and urbane in the extreme, his fluency uninterrupted, and with practice I have little doubt of his becoming a first-

rate, off-hand debater, the only debating talent that is worth a farthing in a House constituted like ours."

Five weeks later, Mr. EVERETT, who, from first to last, was the adversary of the nullifiers and all their brood, delivered a carefully prepared speech in opposition to Mr. MacDuffie. Up to that time the President, John Quincy Adams, had carefully kept back from uttering a word that could be specially offensive to a Southern slaveholder, and had even maintained a "non-committal" reserve on the subject of what was called the protection of domestic industry. Mr. EVERETT, in opposing a scheme of Southern statesmen, desired to announce emphatically that he was no opponent of the South; and by an eagerness, not unusual in an orator, his rhetoric went beyond his intention. He uttered some words that were justly cen-

sured; and applied apologetically to our century the usages and language of two thousand years ago; yet on this occasion he was perfectly sincere, and perfectly consistent with his own character and antecedent discourse. And this brings me to an explanation of qualities in his nature, which affected his long career as a statesman, and must be taken as the interpretation of his whole life. His organization was so delicate, his nervous system so fine and sympathetic and quick, that he could not contemplate scenes of blood without an instinctive horror. Esteeming his colleagues from South Carolina, and loving their society, he refused to consider an institution which they upheld as wholly inexcusable, or universally and absolutely wrong; and the thought of the sorrows that would follow the track of insurgent slaves was more than he could bear. Hence, his utterance of words which might seem to

have been offered in excuse for slavery itself. But with all this dread of sanguinary revolution and the war of races, Mr. EVERETT was, by that very sensitiveness of organization, full of sympathy for all who were unhappy or oppressed; he upheld the radical doctrine of democracy against the Tory and imperialist theory of the divine right, or right of force, and against the English Whig doctrine of compact; his mind sometimes ran in a channel which a socialist might have been willing to follow; he repelled the heart-withering doctrines of Malthus; he kindled the burning fellow-feeling for the uprising of the Greeks; he spoke for the dignity and the welfare of the free working man; and without violating his instincts or habits of thought, he gave at the close of his life his testimony for immediate, universal emancipation. By the apprehensiveness of his constitution he was timidly conservative; by the sentiments of his heart

he was the friend of equal rights and of mankind. This apparent contradiction, which has existed in other great and good men, qualified all the judgments made of him by those who really knew him; and if, by those who did not know the depth of his love for liberty and his fellowmen, he was sometimes chidden for want of firmness, those who read the secrets of his soul were aware that he would be more likely to encounter martyrdom for his sympathies and opinions than those who doubted his power of self-sacrifice; and in his first speech in Congress, and always to his dying breath, he fought inflexibly against the revolutionary tendencies of the evil spirit then known as nullification.

This divided nature unfitted him to become a debater in Congress; he might shine as the representative of a party, but not as a party leader. Had he had more alloy, he would have been a better political gladiator. But

his industry made his services essential to those with whom he acted; some of the best official reports put forth by his political friends are of his workmanship; and he excelled on occasions when he could strike a chord that vibrated sweetly for all. This was never more marked than in his farewell to Congress, when in beautiful language and his most impressive manner, he paid a tribute to General Jackson, the restorer of the Union, then engaged in upholding the rights and honor of our country and establishing peace with France.

In 1835 Mr. EVERETT passed from Congress into the chair of Governor of Massachusetts. Parties were becoming more evenly balanced; the Northern Democracy, as organized in that State, was as much devoted to the Union as himself, as much opposed to all the forms of nullification, and quite as independent of the influence of slavery; but

they differed from him by vindicating the policy of separating the public revenue from the hazards of paper currency, and by greater inclination to the principles of free trade. They increased gradually in weight and in numbers, and at the end of four years he found his opponent elected over him by a majority of one vote. The contest had been carefully kept free from personal asperity towards EVERETT; the opponents of his party had treated him with the reverence which his just administration and his personal virtues deserved; and the new democratic governor paid the fullest tribute of esteem to his predecessor, whom, with an unwonted strength of expression toward a man still so young, he described as "illustrious." Among those who contributed to EVERETT'S defeat, was one at least whom he counted amongst his intimate friends; but he never allowed himself to be swayed by a sentiment of bitterness, and

never required from those he loved a sacrifice of political conviction to personal regard.

After a year devoted to rest during a residence in Italy, whence he was careful to send home works of art of superior excellence, he was again called to the public service as minister to England. His political position appears from the manner in which his nomination was received by the Senate. The southern party against which he had always stood in Congress, made war upon his appointment, because he had not proved a friend to slavery, and it merits to be brought to mind, that he was saved from a rejection by the vote of a part of the northern democracy.

How assiduous he was in London to all the duties of his station; how devoted to the general interests of his country; how attentive to the claims of individuals; how perfectly he bore himself in a foreign land as the representative of this Republic, and not of a

party—is still fresh in the public memory. The great and the good of all classes sought his society; he was a most welcome guest at every country-house which he found time to visit; and in town, Macaulay, and Hallam and Milman, and Sidney Smith, and Babbage were among his constant companions and friends.

When EVERETT returned home he stood undoubtedly at the head of the men of letters of New England, and perhaps I might say at the head of the men of letters of America. True, Longfellow excelled him in poetry, and Hawthorne in romance, and Prescott in history, and the incomparable Irving in his own peculiar walks; but in power of rapid and exact acquisition of knowledge, in variety and comprehensiveness of research, in the perfectly methodical arrangement of his learning, in the sovereign command over the vast mass of his resources, in the warmth and

rich coloring of style, in correctness, in the use of words, in the finished neatness of composition, he excelled all. The eyes of men turned to him to take the presidency of Harvard College. One at least of his intimate friends had warned him against accepting the office; of which his acceptance would certainly bring advantage to the public, but would overwhelm him with petty cares and torment his too sensitive nature with provoking annoyances. Besides, his habits of study and occupation at home began very seriously to impair his health; he had not in youth indulged in athletic exercises, in wrestling, or running, or riding; now it was too late for him to change his habits, and, as a consequence, his mode of life required extraordinary circumspection. But he yielded to the public requisition, which seemed the call of duty. It was well for the institution that he did so; but the office was

a continued martyrdom for himself. Under his scrupulous sense of responsibility, he devoted himself wholly to his task; his favorite studies were suspended; his mind was all in his work. When he came to the government of the college, its discipline had run down; the old scholarly atmosphere had become a little tainted with indulgences in former time unknown; the liberal endowment for a library and a large part of the college funds had been foolishly squandered in an ill-shapen building, poorly adapted to its end. But EVERETT set earnestly and conscientiously about his task; his supervision of the affairs of the college was perfect; and though he personally suffered from dealing with the occasional levity and perverseness of youth, the university has never in our day had a more faithful and able chief.

When EVERETT retired from the chair, men spoke of how much he had sacrificed

and how much he had suffered during the few years of his administration; on reflection they see how much he had done to raise the character of the university, which he left improved if not regenerated.

His first leisure was given to making a collection of his various addresses; and he performed the greatest act of friendship for Mr. Webster by editing his works and writing his life. Here, too, his own special character appeared; the strength of Webster is not impaired by his treatment; but, as far as he could, he softened asperities and veiled the rudeness of conflicts, being always as careful to efface the follies or the errors of an opponent, as of an associate.

The health of Mr. Webster was failing; those who saw him in near interviews could trace the rapid decay of his vigor; for the last months, perhaps for more than the last year, of his life, he was unequal to his duties

as Secretary of State; on his death EVERETT was summoned to be his successor, and this was the public position for which, above all others, he was fitted. Here too the fine and generous tone of his mind appeared to the greatest advantage. He never lisped a word of the confusion in which he found the affairs of the department, or the heavy arrears of accumulated business. He went diligently to work to repair what his friend had of necessity neglected; he noiselessly and thoroughly restored order where it was wanting; he finished without hurry, but completely, what remained to be done; and he did it all in such a manner that he was alike faithful to his affection for the memory and good name of his predecessor, and faithful to his country. We all remember with pride the vigor with which he repelled an invitation for an entangling alliance with foreign powers respecting the government of Cuba. All parties have

joined in praising the ability which he displayed during this short period of administrative service.

Before he retired from the cares of office, which to him were not oppressive, his native commonwealth sent him to the Senate of the United States. It was too late. His nervous excitability, heightened by his sufferings as an invalid, wholly unfitted him for a place in a body in which the debates were daily becoming more fierce. His health was broken; he could not bear the late and the uncertain hours of labor which the Senate demanded; and under the peremptory and wise direction of his physician, he soon retired to private life, which he was never again to leave.

The calmness of his quiet years allowed him to nurse his constitution, and his old age was beautiful and happy. There was no voice which his countrymen so loved to hear on

questions of public interest, the culture of science, the advancement of learning. Others live only for themselves and within themselves; EVERETT lived for others, and was never so happy as when he played upon the great instrument of the national mind, and found that his touch brought out tones in harmony with the movements of his own soul. This mode of life was attended with something of trial; for the sensitiveness which was a requisite to his success in keeping up a sympathy with the mind of the people left him more than ever acutely susceptible of pain from public censure, and even from the idle cavils of triflers, or the sneers of the envious and malign. But the current of public opinion was so strong in his favor, he called out so much affectionate approval by his singularly disinterested devotion to the public good, that his last years were among the happiest of his three score and ten—

happier than the years of impatient, aspiring youth; happier than the years of political conflict. It was a remark of the late John C. Calhoun that there is no reward so much to be desired as "for a man to stand well with his kind." EVERETT stood well and beloved among his fellow-men.

He saw the clouds that were lowering over the land, and prayed earnestly that they might be dispelled. For the sake of the Union he kept constantly before the mind of the nation the name and memory of Washington; and devoted himself with earnestness to setting apart MOUNT VERNON as the spot where all Americans might meet, with an equal glow of patriotism. There at least the transient passions of the day were to be hushed by recalling the immutable glory of the past; and thus disloyalty was to be rebuked by the present influence of the father of the country. His zeal in this cause led

him to accept the munificent invitation of the LEDGER; and when he had in that way become accustomed to discourse to a cloud of listeners whose number was incalculable, his love of sympathy assisted to make that journal his favorite way of access to the public. But his views as a statesman could not be suppressed; and his papers in the LEDGER reflected, at first indirectly, then more openly, his judgments on public affairs.

To promote the great end of maintaining the Union, EVERETT was not an advocate for concession, but for conservatism. He had in his manhood resisted nullification with all his might; he now resisted everything that tended to secession. To keep the constitution as it was, and thus to avoid all conflict with the South, was the key-note of his policy; and when men sought to avert the storm which threatened ruin, one party looked to him, in connection with another

name, to bear, in the presidential contest, the standard on which was inscribed "the Constitution and the Union." The selection was just; for he was ever a lover of the Union, and ever a supporter of the Constitution in its simple integrity, unimpaired and unchanged. Without attempting to solve the question whether he was right in the attitude which he assumed, it is certain that he was honest, and that the place as candidate which he consented to occupy, fitted the conduct and the opinions of his life. It is, perhaps, less known, that in the threefold division which prevailed at the presidential election in 1860, it had been the intention of Mr. Douglas, as he avowed to one or two at least of his friends, in case the decision had gone to Congress, to have given his influence to secure the election of the ticket which bore the name of EVERETT.

When the storm burst he could not

remain quiet, and there was but one direction in which he could move. Like Douglas, to whom in so many respects he formed a contrast, he rallied to the support of the government as the only mode in which he could rally in support of his country. Those who had before charged him with want of firmness, had not kept in mind that his delay grew out of his desires and his convictions; when events left no hope of a peaceful issue, he was instant in season and out of season, abroad and at his fireside, with friends and before the people, in giving to the contest unity of action and definiteness of purpose; and while he at the last spoke bravely for universal emancipation, that gentleness which made him so slow to acquiesce in the stern and terrible necessity of civil war, inspired him in the last public act of his life to send consolation to those who had been subdued. He died as he lived, harboring no

persistent ill-will even towards traitors, being satisfied if those who have engaged in rebellion will but give up the institution which led them into evil, and wishing to heal the wounds inflicted on the Union, not by the block, not by confiscation, not by revenge, but by the establishment forever of human freedom.

I have failed in this sketch, if I have not made it clear that the course of life of our departed friend was marked by integrity and consistency, which had their root in his own nature. Are there any who wish his career had been different? It could not have been different except by his ceasing to be himself.

It is equally vain to wish that he had devoted his powers to the completion of some special elaborate work. He was an orator, because to be an orator was what he liked best; what he was most fitted for, and what others most entreated of him. It is not

certain that he would have been one of the first of historians; those of his writings which come nearest to history, such as his Life of Webster and his Life of Washington, are by no means his best. No one would have painted action in more vivid colors; but of the three qualities which are needed by historians, he had not a sufficient perception of how bad men can be, of that evil in human nature which theologians call depravity. Neither was he accustomed sufficiently to consider events as subordinate to law. The other requisite, which is to perceive that after all there is something in man greater than himself, he had in an eminent degree; and this perception he turned brilliantly to account in his addresses. Neither would he have been apt to excel in the construction of a scheme of dogmatic theology or philosophy; and perhaps there are others in our time who would have gone

beyond him as a systematic expounder of public law. But in the field of mental labor to which he devoted himself, he is first among us without a rival. He touched the chord of public feeling with instinctive accuracy and power; at seventy he could hold a vast audience enchained, as he spoke without notes, with a clear, melodious, and unbroken voice for two hours together; and when he prepared himself for a public speech, all learning and all science seemed to come at his bidding, and furnish him with arguments, analogies, and illustrations. What he has spoken with his golden mouth was always in behalf of good letters, of patriotism, of the advancement of his country in science and art; of union; of the perpetuation of republican institutions. From the Charles River to the Missouri the air still rings with his eloquence.

There remains no man alive who has given

such an impulse to the minds of the young in his generation; they will rise up to bless his name and to preserve his memory in honor.

GEORGE BANCROFT.

NEW YORK, January 18, 1865.

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY. HIS MONUMENT.

THE United States of America alone of the nations is the representative of humanity, for it alone is composed of men from every civilized State in the world. Moreover, they take the lead in the science of political organizations, having taught the lesson which other nations must follow if they will

thrive, that by the true federal system, local self-government may be enjoyed in perfection throughout a continent under one head. The man who, more than any other, brought about these results, deserves the constant affection of mankind. This day the chord that runs under the ocean tells all the cultivated nations of the earth that the American people devote their hours to the contemplation of the character and achievements of George Washington, and invite them all to take part in the sublime commemoration.

Long before the close of his career, the great soldier and statesman at once aroused admiration and love in all classes of men. At the beck of Virginia, Houdon, in his time the foremost of French sculptors, crossed the Atlantic, with disinterested enthusiasm, to study the face of the hero, and observe his attitudes and his step, that he might faithfully embody his likeness in stone. North Caro-

lina called on Canova, who in his own life had no rival but Thorwaldsen, to carve for the State a statue of Washington; and when more than sixty-six years ago he conducted a young American through his studio where his works were all present in marble, or in their original clay, he dwelt with marked delight on those in which his material had been white without a perverse vein or a spot. When the American asked him the quality of the block of marble which he had chosen for Washington, he answered, with sparkling eyes: "*Bianchissimo come la sua anima;*" as spotlessly white as his own soul.

Chateaubriand, the devotee of a tempered monarchy, and an artist in that which is one of the highest of the fine arts, the just expression of thought in prose, before he left Paris to take part in the Congress of Verona, received a visit from Count Circourt, who was still in the heyday of youth. This life

long friend of Americans, as he parted from the man whom he revered, expressed to Chateaubriand his supreme happiness in having seen the greatest man of his age. "Hush, young man," interposed Chateaubriand, "you have not seen Washington."

Christian Karl Bunsen, long the Prussian ambassador at London, who, having served in Italy as well as in England, knew all the great men of his time, saw in Washington the disinterested benefactor of a people, and declared that before his equal in history could be found the inquirer must travel back to the time of Moses.

To justify such a conclusion, it is not enough that a man should be endowed with singular, or even unique powers. He must have manifested them in public acts before he can claim a great place in history.

Washington, in his youth, was chosen by those who knew him well to take part in the

events which extended the rule of the English-speaking people to the Mississippi and indefinitely to the north.

In the expedition of Braddock he was the only one who saw clearly what should be done; in the terrible disaster that ensued he was the only officer who gained glory for himself and his Virginia regiment. He came from the field with a reputation so well established that he was already looked upon as one destined by Providence to render the greatest services to his country.

In the campaign which carried the English banner to Pittsburgh, joint voices from New England and from Virginia led to his appointment on the staff of the commanding general. His counsels, which, young as he was, were the dictates of just reflection, were followed. He was appointed to lead the advanced troops as a brigadier, and by his command the English banner—destined to give way to

none but the banner of his independent country—floated in triumph over the junction of the waters that make the Ohio, and the dominion of the English tongue was at once extended to the Mississippi.

When the evil influences misguided Great Britain into an attempt to subvert the rights of America, no one was swifter than Washington to discern the scope of the design, and to hold himself ready to take up arms for its defeat. I have had in my hands his letter to his royalist friend, Bryan Fairfax, of the twenty-fourth of August, 1774, in which the cause of America is supported in his own language and his own style with perfect clearness and precision of statement, as well as with brevity and decision.

When he took command of the army what endless troubles did he not immediately encounter from the want of money and of credit, and of men! How often was he compelled by

the short-sightedness of Congress to repeat, and how often in vain, the admonitions as to the manner in which the army should be organized; admonitions which Moltke—than whom no other living man has so many points of resemblance with Washington—cited to the German Diet in confirmation of advice drawn from his own experience.

The esteem of his fellow-men was the only reward which he coveted for his labors; and yet, when at one period of the war an attempt was made to turn the public opinion against him, and nothing for the vindication of his honor was needed but to lay before the public the narrowness of the means which Congress had placed at his disposal, he refused to repel reproaches by one single word of the truth, saying: "To clear myself from blame would do injury to my country."

When the King of France sent a French army, commanded by officers taken in a great

measure from the highest nobility, to serve in America, and placed it absolutely under the command of Washington, how did its officers vie with one another in their confidence in their republican general! How, for his sake, and the cause which he defended, they trod under foot all jealousies between one another! How men of superior rank in the army, if the good of the service for the moment required it, served without a word of reluctance under those of an inferior one!

How Washington had, for their lives, the hearts of every one of them! When no other voice could prevail, how did he himself in person persuade the commander of the French squadron in American waters to submit to his advice! Where will you find in the wars of Europe an example of so perfect a union.

All agree, without one single dissenting voice, that but for Washington the war of

the American Revolution—this first decisive contest between government founded upon the rights of man and government as inherited from the past—must have failed.

When the war of the Revolution was at an end, it remained to do what had never before been thought possible—to form a continent into one efficient nation through a perfect concert of self-governing States. After a vain struggle through a long war, and after the approach of peace had made the country despair of effecting a real union, it was the voice of Washington that was listened to, as he summoned the people of the several States to meet in convention and form the new constitution. But for Washington the federal convention never could have been called, and as a consequence the American constitution could never have been framed.

Without Washington the Constitution of the United States never would have been

formed; and may it not be said that without him, the States, which were so strong each within itself, might never have consolidated the Union?

The constitution was the form of union, but it had not, as yet, life in the habits and minds of the citizens of the several States. The new government could not, in a moment, supercede in the affections of the common people the old government under which they had thriven so long. It took time for the tendrils to be formed by which the plants should cling to their new support. It was universally acknowledged by the friends of the constitution that at the moment no other man than Washington had the capacity to set the powers of the new government successfully in motion. When, after eight years, he retired from the presidency, he left the Union established.

After he retired, the point from which to

contemplate his character is that of devotedness to the Union. He had a successor regularly chosen by the people, and he saw in him the representative of union. He saw in his vicinity the incipient tendency to a conspiracy against the Union, growing in strength. Just in the degree in which that opposition to union increased, did he put himself forward as ready even to take the field, and published to the statesmen of Virginia and to the world his determination to stand immovably for union, and, if necessary, to maintain, even in arms, the new constitution as the most perfect model of government ever established by man.

So, throughout a long life, Washington was from his youth to the moment of his death, employed in events which affected the great powers of the earth, and for the rest of his life he took the leading part in the greatest modern epoch in the history of the race.

Without him the war of the Revolution would not have succeeded; without him the convention for framing the constitution could never have assembled, nor the constitution have been framed. His influence was superior to that of any other man in securing the adoption of the constitution; so that it may be even believed that but for him it could not have been adopted. All agree that his services were essential as President to put the new constitution in motion; and he died proclaiming to his country that resistance to the Union by unlawful force must be met by the lawful exertion of force. He who proclaims the greatness of Washington may, at least, point to a life filled full of all-momentous deeds.

It is but fair to concede leave to a skeptical inquirer to demand what manner of man was he who, by his deeds, secured such blessings for the race; and the observer must be

ready to specify the qualities from which flowed these transcendant results.

The character of Washington's greatness may be described, in its unity, as the highest wisdom of common sense; that is to say, the largest endowment of the power that constitutes the highest part of the nature of man; or, it may be described as in action the perfection of reflective judgment. That common sense, or reflective judgment, was combined with creative and executive capacity. If he spoke, or if he wrote, he came directly to the point on which the matter in discussion depended; and pronounced his thoughts in clear, strong, and concise words; if he was to act, he suited his means, be they scanty or sufficient, in the best way to his end. When America assembled its ablest men in a first congress, Patrick Henry said; "For sound judgment, Colonel Washington is

unquestionably the greatest man on that floor."

His will moved with the greatest momentum; but in the supreme moment of excitement it was ever under his control. In moderation, which is the test of greatness, no one exceeded him. He was humane; he never wasted the life of a soldier. The highest excitement to which he ever yielded was impassioned grief at the unjust sufferings of others.

This is the praise of Washington. In the construction of the government of the nation he would never suffer the employment of physical force; he sought to guide the country only by giving good advice, and enforcing it by a manifest integrity and disinterested affection for the public good. His fixed belief was, that an available constitution could be formed only by means of the public wisdom and will, legally expressed, and

honestly obeyed. This is the wand of enchantment by which Washington controlled the judgment and the will of his countrymen.

It is said of Raphael that the idea of BEAUTY was so enshrined in his nature that it nourished his imagination, inspired his inventive powers, and guided his hands; so that of all the painters known to us, he is the greatest. In like manner, Washington had within himself the idea of GOODNESS, the creative principle and ruling power of his life, illuminating every part of his mind and his heart, and guiding him in every action. The crowning glory of his character was his purity of will. Who in the world's history is his equal?

Miltiades rescued Hellenic civilization from Asiatic despotism; and generation after generation gratefully dwell on his name. But the great act of Miltiades was the deed of a single day. After a busy life of action Wash-

ington still served humanity in his old age, and died in the public service.

Of Julius Cæsar, the youth was profligate. In manhood he was overwhelmed with debt till he obtained the rule of a province. Italy was sinking under the system of large estates cultivated by slave labor, and Cæsar increased the desolation by sending home hordes of captives to be sold as slaves. He could not reform the Roman constitution, for he had no moral power, and could rely only on his legions. He fell when about to assume the emblems of a monarch, leaving to his own times, and to posterity, a pestilent example.

Cromwell stepped from the peaceful cultivation of the soil to the command of armies, and the direction of victory. But his strength was in the sword, and therefore he could give peace neither to England, nor to Scotland, nor to Ireland; still less conciliate

the three by establishing, with their consent, a new constitution. For this reason the influence of the greatest one in the line of English princes could not outlast his life.

Napoleon Bonaparte was "a great worrior," not a great man. Gaining power by treason and bloodshed, he was mad enough to attempt to quarter his family as kings and princes, and his generals as pensioners on some of the proudest nations of Europe; and the result was that after he had exhausted France in wars of contest, and after having kings of the old lines for his companions and princes for his servants, he was driven beyond the equator, leaving France with a diminished boundary to be the sufferer for his crimes.

It is Washington alone who led thirteen separate States jointly to independence, and then to union under a constitution framed by themselves.

The monument to Washington, though it may show no sign that we have among us a Pericles and a Phidias, speaks the thought of the American people. It is not built over the dust and ashes, the wasting relics of WASHINGTON; these are preserved where they properly belong, on the heights of Mount Vernon, the scene of his domestic life, his own beloved home. There let them rest forever. The monument which points to the skies was built to keep in memory the services and the virtues of the living man. It points to no career that is ended; it points to deeds that are to have their influence as long as the nation keeps together, as long as the world shall remain.

The monument is made in honor not of dust and ashes that lie buried, but of the person whose spirit and influence and character are to-day fresh and active. The monument is the evidence that Washington still

lives. It looks to the south and to the north, to the west and to the east, and its voice cries to all: "The Union must be preserved—the Union must last forever."

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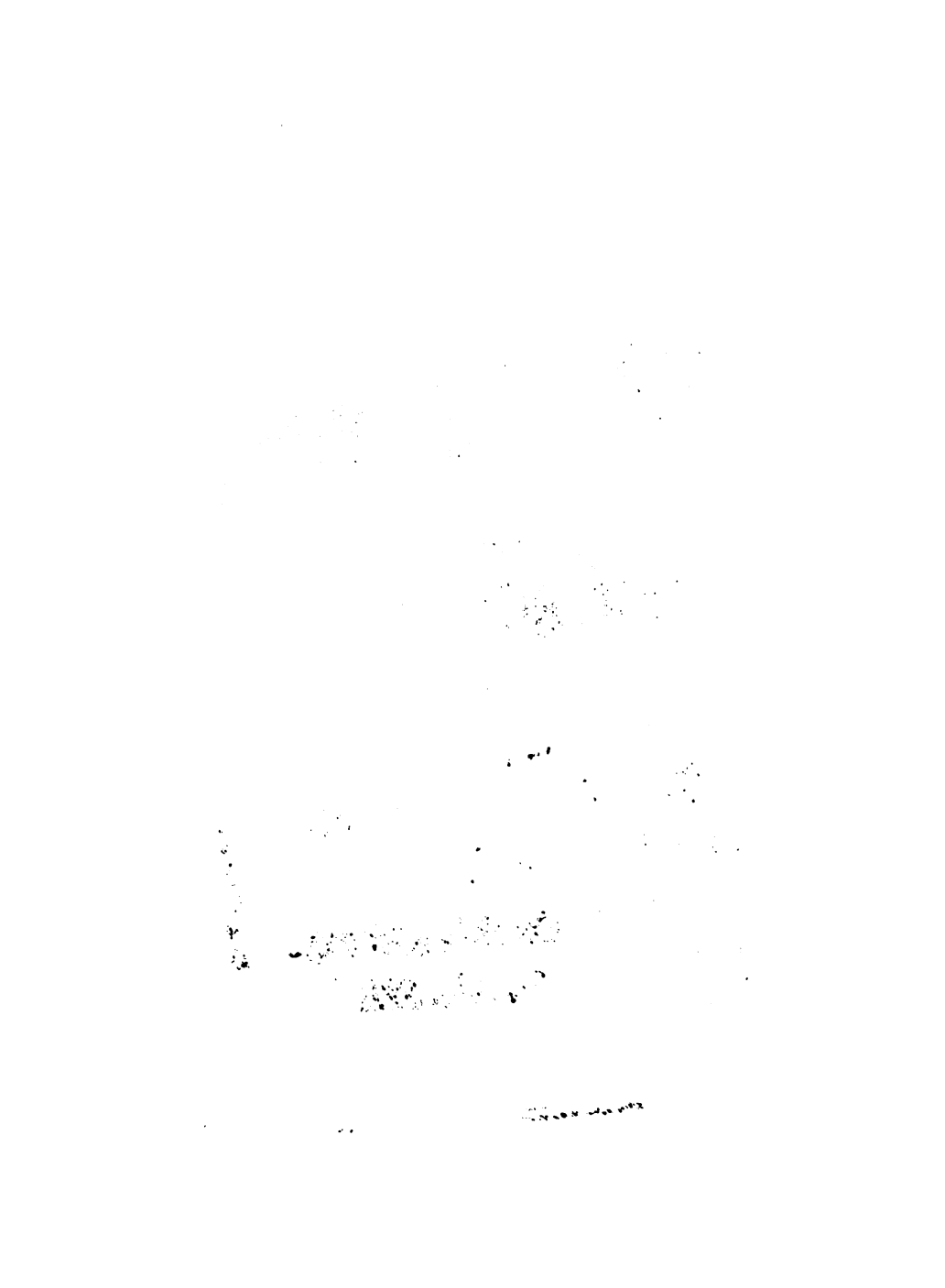

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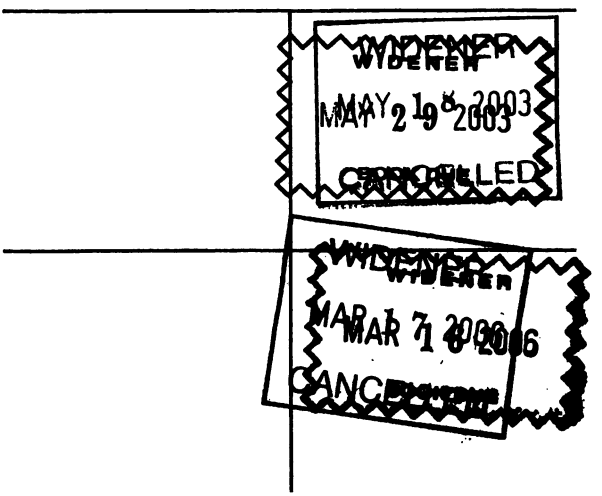
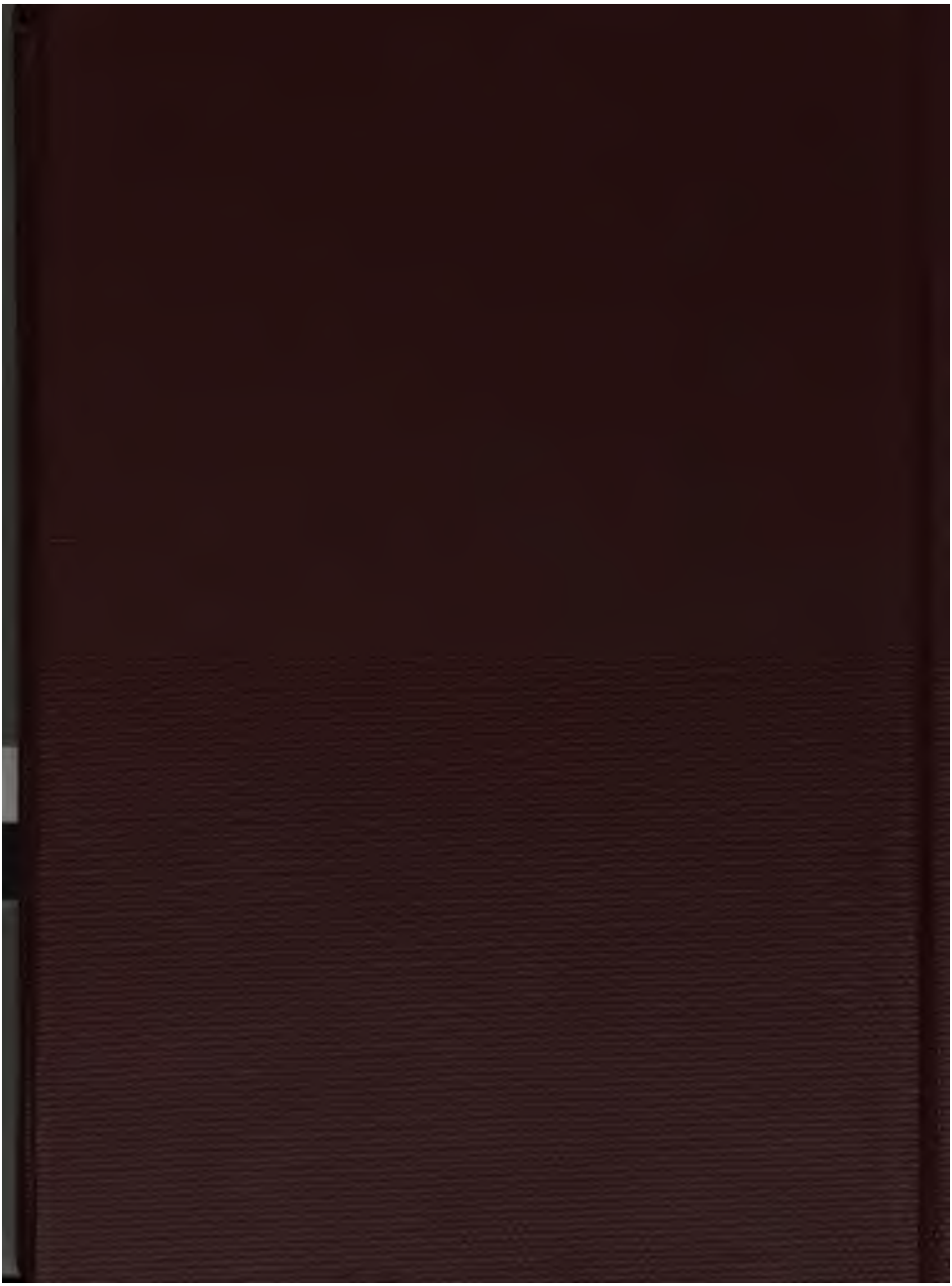
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